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THE LATIN CLASSICS

VOLUME FOUR

Poetry—Amatory, Philosophical, Mythological

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION:

LUCRETIUS, THE POET-PHILOSOPHER 1
By William Augustus Merrill, L.H.D., Professor of Latin in the University of California

DE RERUM NATURA [CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THINGS], BY LUCRETIUS:

Abridged by W. H. Mallock, with Translation of Passages into English Verse by the Same . . 7

INTRODUCTION:

THE LIFE OF CATULLUS 57
By the Rev. James Davies, M.A.

THE POEMS OF CATULLUS:

Translated in the Metres of the Original by Robinson Ellis of Oxford 65

INTRODUCTION:

THE LIFE OF TIBULLUS 151
By James Grainger, M.D.

THE ELEGIES OF TIBULLUS, INCLUDING THE POEMS OF SULPICIA:

Translated into English Verse by James Grainger, M.D. 162

INTRODUCTION:

THE LIFE OF PROPERTIUS 227
By Sir Charles Abraham Elton

THE ELEGIES OF PROPERTIUS:

PAGE

Translated into English Verse by Sir Charles Abraham Elton 237

INTRODUCTION:

THE LIFE OF OVID 265

By the Rev. Alfred Church, M.A.

THE METAMORPHOSES OF OVID—BOOKS I TO IV INCLUSIVE:

Translated into English Prose by Henry T. Riley, B.A., of Cambridge University 327

ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE

DEATH OF VIRGINIA . . . . . Frontispiece
From an engraving after a painting by Vincenzio Camucinni

OVID 272
From an old engraving

THE FATES 380
From a painting by Paul Thumann

JUN 27 1957
JUN 27 1957

INTRODUCTION

LUCRETIUS, THE POET-PHILOSOPHER

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MERRILL, L.H.D.,

Professor of Latin in the University of California.

WE know very little that is certain about the life of Titus Lucretius Carus. Saint Jerome, the great theologian and translator of the Bible, says that in the year 95 before Christ, Titus Lucretius the poet was born, and that he was made insane through a love-potion, and that in the intervals of his insanity he wrote some books that were amended by Cicero, and that he slew himself with his own hand in the 44th year of his life. Modern scholars accept the date of the poet's death, but attach little significance to the remainder of the account. The story of the love-potion points to mental disorder brought about by drugs, and Lucretius' intermittent insanity and his suicide are not improbable. Very likely he was an epileptic. Whether Cicero edited the great poem of Lucretius, Concerning the Nature of Things, is doubtful and of no importance, for there is no trace in it of any editing whatever; and whether Saint Jerome meant by Cicero the great orator or his younger brother is also uncertain.

It is in the poem itself that the author reveals his character. He was evidently a high-spirited Roman who moved in the upper classes of society, well educated in Greek learning, but a Roman patriot. There is no evidence of any struggle with poverty or of any insecurity of social position; he was apparently a man who was free to pursue the intellectual life, and who gave himself up with Roman earnestness to wrestle with the great theological questions that come to all

serious minds. He lived in the troublous days of the declining Republic, a period of great unrest, when the Romans had lost the simplicity of life and thought that they had had as a plain Italian people. They had ceased to be a nation of farmers and tradesmen, ignorant of philosophy, and they no longer lived according to the frugal and unimaginative standards of a simple and unschooled race.

From the very beginning the expansion of Roman power had brought with it the evil that expansion always brings; and with wealth and power and knowledge came also pride and corruption and skepticism. Many there were who accepted carelessly the new order of things, but others, like Lucretius, men of sincerity of character and of high principle, were plunged into deep distress. How were the new and the old to be reconciled? Was the old Roman religion true with its careful provisions for the needs of men? Did the gods take care of the infant at his birth and watch over his tender years, visiting him with blessings and punishing him for his faults, providing him with a world of beauty to live in and guarding him and keeping him from all harm, and finally taking him to themselves for another life of blessedness or of suffering, according to the character of his earthly career? But how explain human suffering, the frequent triumph of evil, the pitilessness of Nature, the terrors of earthquake, fire, and flood? Greek philosophy had answered these questions in many ways and with varying degrees of clearness; but only two solutions were commonly accepted by the Romans. One was given by the Stoics, who maintained the doctrine of divine providence, of faith and obedience, of justice and the triumph of the right in the end; and their principles, agreeing closely with those of the Roman traditional religion, were accepted by many, perhaps by the best, Roman minds. But opposed to the Stoics were the Epicureans, who were materialists and scientists, who emphasized physical law rather than moral conduct.

It is always so: one mind will be attracted by ethical questions to which natural science will be subordinate, while to another, scientific truth will be of the first importance, and all else will be of little consequence. Lucretius approached the

problem from the physical side, and, granting the premises of the Epicurean school, the consequences are logical and true. If the world is the result of the blind concurrence of atoms, if natural phenomena are due to the working of natural law, that is, of the habits of matter, if man is material, including his mind and soul, then there is no room for religion, and no future life and no divine providence. And this is the position of Lucretius. After many a long struggle he thought he had gained peace of mind, and like many enthusiasts he overestimated the importance of the problem and the solution thereof to those who had not passed through an experience like his own. His task was plain: to publish the new gospel with Roman thoroughness and with the passion and ardor that only a profound nature, agitated to its very depths, could exhibit. He therefore chose poetry rather than prose as his medium; his fundamental arguments he took mainly from his master Epicurus; and these he developed, with passionate enthusiasm, in a poetical form that he found in Empedocles and Ennius; but the essential character of the poem is Roman.

This poem on Nature is the only work that has come down to us from Lucretius' hand, and is probably the only product of his genius. Its main object is to show that the world is governed by natural law without the aid of the gods, and that, consequently, religion has no terrors for man. Indeed, religion in the ordinary sense of the term ceases to have any significance, although the Epicureans inferred the existence of the gods who should serve as types of perfection to men, living in eternal peace and calm, but "careless of mankind." After establishing his cosmogony through the play of natural forces, he confirms to his own satisfaction the mortality of the soul, and sketches the origin of society through natural development, closing with an explanation of meteoric and terrestrial phenomena and with a description of the great plague of Athens. Such was no proper end of the poem, and there are many other indications that it was never finished.

The De Rerum Natura was closely studied by Horace and Virgil, and in the last few centuries has had great indirect influence on human thought. Chemists and physicists have

found in it an anticipation of the atomic theory, and the followers of Darwin and Wallace have seen in it a dim adumbration of the evolutionary hypothesis. Modern poets have studied it and Tennyson has interpreted most happily the author's spirit. Mrs. Browning declares that Lucretius died "chief poet on the Tiber side." The real excellence of the poem is in its sublimity of thought, its passionate support of scientific principles, its relentlessness in logical conclusion, its Roman thoroughness and honesty, and its stately movement and majestic rhythm. Perhaps nothing has come down to us in Latin literature that is more characteristically Roman than this sublime poem.

LUCRETIUS

DE RERUM NATURA

[CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THINGS]

ABRIDGED AND TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE AND PROSE, BY

W. H. MALLOCK

LUCRETIUS

Ay, but I meant not thee; I meant not her,
Whom all the pines of Ida shook to see
Slide from that quiet heaven of hers, and tempt
The Trojan, while his neat-herds were abroad;
Nor her that o'er her wounded hunter wept
Her Deity false in human-amorous tears;
Nor whom her beardless apple-arbiter
Decided fairest. Rather, O ye Gods,
Poet-like, as the great Sicilian called
Calliope to grace his golden verse—
Ay, and this Kypris also—did I take
That popular name of thine to shadow forth
The all-generating powers and genial heat
Of nature, when she strikes through the thick blood
Of cattle, and light is large, and lambs are glad
Nosing the mother's udder, and the bird
Makes his heart voice amid the blaze of flowers:
Which things appear the work of mighty Gods.

—Tennyson.

DE RERUM NATURA

[Concerning the Nature of Things]

BOOK I

INVOCATION

Mother and mistress of the Roman race,
  Pleasure of gods and men, O fostering
Venus, whose presence breathes in every place,
  Peopling all soils whence fruits and grasses spring,
And all the water's navigable ways,
  Water and earth and air and everything,
Since by thy power alone their life is given
To all beneath the sliding signs of heaven;

Goddess, thou comest, and the clouds before thee
  Melt, and the ruffian blasts take flight and fly;
The dædal lands, they know thee and adore thee,
  And clothe themselves with sweet flowers instantly;
Whilst pouring down its largest radiance o'er thee,
  In azure calm subsides the rounded sky,
To overarch thine advent; and for thee
A livelier sunlight laughs along the sea.

For lo, no sooner come the soft and glowing
  Days of the spring, and all the air is stirred
With amorous breaths of zephyrs freshly blowing,
  Than the first prelude of thy power is heard
On all sides, in aerial music flowing
  Out of the bill of every pairing bird;
And every songster feels, on every tree,
Its small heart pulsing with the power of thee.

Next the herds feel thee; and the wild fleet races
  Bound o'er the fields, that smile in the bright weather,

And swim the streaming floods in fordless places,
  Led by thy chain, and captive in thy tether.
At last through seas and hills, thine influence passes,
  Through field and flood and all the world together,
And the birds' leafy homes; and thou dost fire
Each to renew his kind with sweet desire.

Wherefore, since thou, O lady, only thou
  Art she who guides the world upon its way;
Nor can aught rise without thee anyhow
  Up into the clear borders of the day,
Neither can aught without thee ever grow
  Lovely and sweet—to thee, to thee I pray—
Aid and be near thy suppliant as he sings
Of nature and the secret ways of things.

For I have set myself [he goes on], to expound these as best I may to my dear friend, the son of the Memmii, in this very poem; and for my affection to him, I would have every charm given to my verses. And do thou, my Memmius, so far as thou canst in these present troublous times, give an attentive ear to me, for I am going to explain to you the whole system of things; and out of what first elements the world, and men, and gods have all alike arisen. I have a teacher—Epicurus—who has explained all these things to me; and his teachings when first given to men made a new era in their history.[1]

When human life, a shame to human eyes,
  Lay sprawling in the mire in foul estate,
A cowering thing without the strength to rise,
  Held down by fell Religion's heavy weight—
Religion scowling downward from the skies,
  With hideous head, and vigilant eyes of hate—
First did a man of Greece presume to raise
His brows, and give the monster gaze for gaze.

Him not the tales of all the gods in heaven,
  Nor the heaven's lightnings, nor the menacing roar

[1] The prose portions of the abridgment are based on the translation of H. A. J. Munro.

Of thunder daunted. He was only driven,
  By these vain vauntings, to desire the more
To burst through Nature's gates, and rive the unriven
  Bars. And he gained the day; and, conqueror,
His spirit broke beyond our world, and past
Its flaming walls, and fathomed all the vast.

And back returning, crowned with victory, he
  Divulged of things the hidden mysteries,
Laying quite bare what can and cannot be,
  How to each force is set strong boundaries,
How no power raves unchained, and nought is free.
  So the times change; and now religion lies
Trampled by us; and unto us 'tis given
Fearless with level gaze to scan the heaven.

Yet fear I lest thou haply deem that thus
  We sin, and enter wicked ways of reason.
Whereas 'gainst all things good and beauteous
  'Tis oft religion does the foulest treason.
Has not the tale of Aulis come to us,
  And those great chiefs who, in the windless season,
Bade young Iphianassa's form be laid
Upon the altar of the Trivian maid?

Soon as the fillet round her virgin hair
  Fell in its equal lengths down either cheek,—
Soon as she saw her father standing there,
  Sad, by the altar, without power to speak,
And at his side the murderous minister,
  Hiding the knife, and many a faithful Greek
Weeping—her knees grew weak, and with no sound
She sank, in speechless terror, on the ground.

But nought availed it in that hour accurst
  To save the maid from such a doom as this,
That her lips were the baby lips that first
  Called the king father with their cries and kiss.
For round her came the strong men, and none durst
  Refuse to do what cruel part was his;
So silently they raised her up, and bore her,
All quivering, to the deadly shrine before her.

And as they bore her, ne'er a golden lyre
Rang round her coming with a bridal strain;
But in the very season of desire,
A stainless maiden, amid bloody stain,
She died—a victim felled by its own sire—
That so the ships the wished-for wind might gain,
And air puff out their canvas. Learn thou, then,
To what damned deeds religion urges men.

Yes, and you too, Memmius, even you, will some time or other seek to fall away, and cower under the terrors of this false religion. And, indeed, what safeguard have you? How will you steel yourself against the terrors of the priests, who have ever a life to come with which to threaten you, and in which torments everlasting may, as they say, be yours? Did you know that death was death indeed, then you might keep a stout heart, and brave them. But now what do men know of the soul? They know neither its nature nor its origin—neither whence it came nor whither it is going. How shall they know, then, what may not be in store for it? What shall we do then? Our only hope is in this. Let us grasp first the principles of things; let us learn by what laws the stars and the sun move; how the earth was formed, and how all things live and grow upon it. And above all, let us find out by reason what the soul and mind consists of, and what are the laws of those things whence all our fears arise—imagination, and dreams, and madness.

Hard it is in Latin verses to expound the teachings of the Greeks. Our tongue is poor and wanting. No one has used it yet to treat such themes as these. And yet for your sake, and the pleasure of your sweet friendship, I will not be daunted. I will essay to do my best.

This darkness, then, this terrible darkness, in which the human race is at present cowering, can be dispelled, not by any sunlight, nor the lucid darts of day, but by the aspect and the law of Nature—

For fear takes hold upon the human breast,
When we see many things by Nature done,
Whereof the ways and means are known to none.

And accordingly we ascribe these phenomena to the gods. One thing, therefore, at starting, I will tell you first—how that nothing can be produced from nothing. And when you are once made certain of that, you shall see clearly how all things can be produced and done without the hand of gods.

Lucretius then goes on, in the next two hundred verses, to explain that the elements of all things are atoms and void, supporting his theory by arguments that have been described already. Atoms and void are both alike eternal. All composite things may pass away, but these remain from everlasting. Nothing can be born from nothing; and nothing, when born, can go back to nothing:—

> Things seem to die, but die not. The spring showers
> Die on the bosom of the motherly earth,
> But rise again in fruits and leaves and flowers,
> And every death is nothing but a birth.

Atoms, then, and empty space [he goes on]—these, my friends, are all that really is. You can name nothing that is not a property of these, or else an accident:—

> That is a property which cannot be
> Disjoined from a thing and separate
> Without the said thing's death. Fluidity
> Is thus a property of water; weight
> Is of a stone. Whilst riches, poverty,
> Slavery, freedom, concord, war and hate,
> Which change, and not inhere in things of sense,
> We name not properties, but accidents.

The Trojan war, for instance, was simply an accident of atoms and empty space; nor, but for these, would it ever have come to pass—

> For had things no material substance thus,
> Nor void to move in, never had the fire
> Out of the fairest child of Tyndarus
> Lit in the Phrygian's breast the fell desire,

And put the torch to war; nor Pergamus
Had seen the dumb and lifeless steed draw nigh her,
Out of whose flanks the midnight warriors came,
Who ended all, and wrapt the towers in flame.

Remember then, I again tell you, that here are the two things that alone really are, infinite space and atoms—atoms indivisible, indestructible, that have endured, and that will endure for ever. Wherefore, they who held fire to be the one substance of things, and the sum to have been formed out of fire alone, are, of all philosophers, furthest from the truth. Chief of this band is Heraclitus, a declarer of dark sentences, and a juggler with words.

More famous he with babbling man and vain,
Amongst the Greeks, than those that strive to know
The truth indeed. For fools are always fain
To measure meanings by the gaudy show
Of twisted words that hide them. And a strain
That fills their ears with honeyed overflow
Of phrase and music, is at once decreed
Surely to hold the very truth indeed.

Lucretius then goes on to give the reasons why the theory of Heraclitus is untenable, and how it contradicts the very premises that he himself starts with. Nor any wiser are those who hold that things have four first beginnings, though some of those who have taught this, have been wise—wise above measure is other ways.

Chief of these
Is he of Agrigent, Empedocles.

Him in its three-shored bounds that isle of yore
Reared, which the wild Ionian water laves,
Round curving bays and headlands, evermore
Splashing the brine up out of its green waves.
Here does the racing sea withhold the shore
Of Italy; and here Charybdis raves;
And here does rumbling Ætna moan and strain
For strength to lighten at the skies again.

Fair is that land, and all men hold it fair;
  Its sons who guard its soil are fierce and free,
And all rich things, and gladsome things are there,
  Yet nothing ever was there, nor shall be,
More glorious than this great philosopher—
  More holy, marvellous, and dear than he:
Yea, and with such a strength his mighty line
Shouts through the earth—he seems a voice divine.

And yet, says Lucretius, in spite of all this, he has gone astray about the first beginnings of things, as did also Anaxagoras and all the rest, partly from their wrong conceptions of matter, partly because they denied the reality of empty space. And all these faults of theirs he points out in a way that we have already analysed.

And now mark [he goes on] what remains to be known, and hear it more distinctly. For my mind does not fail to perceive how dark these things are; but yet, despite all difficulties—

Yet my heart smarting with desire for praise,
  Me urges on to sing of themes like these,
And that great longing to pour forth my lays
  Constrains me, and the loved Pierides,
Whose pathless mountain-haunts I now explore,
And glades where no man's foot has fallen before.

Ah sweet, ah sweet, to approach the untainted springs,
  And quaff the virgin waters cool and clear,
And cull the flowers that have been unknown things
  To all men heretofore! and yet more dear
When mine shall be the adventurous hand that brings
  A crown for mine own brows, from places where
The Muse has deigned to grant a crown for none,
Save for my favoured brows, and mine alone.

Nor am I vain, Memmius, in such vaunts as these; for I am struggling to teach great things, and to release the human mind from the fetters of religious fear; and dark as my sub-

ject is, my song is clear and lucid, and over the crabbed things I teach, I lay the Muses' charm.

And now thus far I have taught you how solid bodies of matter fly about ever unvanquished through all time. I have next another thing to teach you. I must show you there is no limit to the sum of these atoms, and likewise that there is no limit to the space they move in. As to space, I need but ask you, how can that be bounded? For whatever bounds it, that thing must itself be bounded likewise; and to this bounding thing there must be a bound again, and so on for ever and ever throughout all immensity. Suppose, however, for a moment, all existing space to be bounded, and that a man runs forward to the uttermost borders, and stands upon the last verge of things, and then hurls forward a winged javelin,—suppose you that the dart, when hurled by the vivid force, shall take its way to the point the darter aimed at, or that something will take its stand in the path of its flight, and arrest it? For one or other of these things must happen. There is a dilemma here that you never can escape from. Place your limit of things as far away as it shall please you, I will dog your steps till you have come to the utmost borders, and I will ask you what then becomes of your javelin. Surely you must see what the end of this must be:—

> The air bounds off the hills, the hills the air;
> Earth bounds the ocean, ocean bounds the lands;
> But the unbounded All is everywhere.

Lucretius here adds various other proofs of the infinity of empty space, and the infinite number of the atoms, all of which have been already stated. Such then, he exclaims, again reiterating his teaching—

> Such is the nature then of empty space,
> The void above, beneath us, and around,
> That not the thunderbolt with pauseless pace,
> Hurtling for ever through the unplumbed profound
> Of time, would find an ending to its race,
> Or e'er grown nearer to the boundless bound.
> So huge a room around, beneath, above,
> Yawns, in which all things being, are and move.

The chance to which our world owes itself needed infinite atoms for its production, infinite trials, and infinite failures, before the present combination of things arose.

For blindly, blindly, and without design,
Did these first atoms their first meetings try;
No ordering thought was there, no will divine
To guide them; but through infinite time gone by
Tossed and tormented they essayed to join,
And clashed through the void space tempestuously,
Until at last that certain whirl began,
Which slowly formed the earth and heaven and man.

And now, my Memmius, be far from trusting those that say all thing press towards the centre, and that there are men beneath the earth, walking with their heads downwards. For the universe being infinite, how can there be any centre to it? And even grant that it had a centre, no heavy body could abide there; for everything that has weight must be for ever and for ever falling, unless some rebound send it upwards.

Space, then, I have already proved to be infinite; and space being infinite, matter must be infinite also; lest, after the winged fashion of flame, the walls of the world break up suddenly, and fly along the mighty void, and the heavens fall upon the earth, and the earth break up from beneath the heaven, and the whole great universe in a single moment

Melt and be gone, and nothing take its place
But viewless atoms and deserted space.

BOOK II

'Tis sweet when tempests roar upon the sea
To watch from land another's deep distress
Amongst the waves—his toil and misery:
Not that his sorrow makes our happiness,
But that some sweetness there must ever be
Watching what sorrows we do not possess:
So, too, 'tis sweet to safely view from far
Gleam o'er the plains the savage ways of war.

But sweeter far to look with purgèd eyes
Down from the battlements and topmost towers
Of learning, those high bastions of the wise,
And far below us see this world of ours,
The vain crowds wandering blindly, led by lies,
Spending in pride and wrangling all their powers,
So far below—the pigmy toil and strife
The pain and piteous rivalries of life.

O peoples miserable! O fools and blind!
What might you cast o'er all the days of man!
And in that night before you and behind
What perils prowl! But you nor will nor can
See that the treasure of a tranquil mind
Is all that Nature pleads for, for this span,
So that between our birth and grave we gain
Some quiet pleasures, and a pause from pain.

Wherefore we see that for the body's need
A pause from pain almost itself suffices.
For only let our life from pain be freed,
It oft itself with its own smile entices,
And fills our healthy hearts with joys indeed,
That leave us small desire for art's devices.
Nor do we sigh for more in hours like these,
Rich in our wealth of sweet simplicities.

What though about the halls no silent band
Of golden boys on many a pedestal
Dangle their hanging lamps from outstretched hand,
To flare along the midnight festival—
Though on our board no priceless vessels stand,
Nor gold nor silver fret the dazzling wall,
Nor does the soft voluptuous air resound
From gilded ceilings with the cithern's sound;

The grass is ours, and sweeter sounds than these,
As down we couch us by the babbling spring,
And overhead we hear the branching trees
That shade us, whisper; and for food we bring
Only the country's simple luxuries.
Ah, sweet is this, and sweetest in the spring,
When the sun goes through all the balmy hours,
And all the green earth's lap is filled with flowers!

These, Memmius, these are this life's true enjoyments; not the seducing pleasures given by wealth and art. Will you get rid of a fever more quickly if you toss under a purple coverlet than under the blanket of a poor man? Just then as treasures, and high birth, and the pomp of kingly power, minister nothing to the body's health, push thy thought but a small step further, and you will see they minister nothing to the mind also: unless, indeed, you find that looking on the proud array of war, and the strength of obedient legions, your mind grows and swells with a haughtier strength also, and the scruples of religion are at once scared away from it, and the fears of death grow faint, and you realise your own power and greatness. But if we see that to talk like this is folly, and that the fear of death cares nothing for human arms and armies, but that it and all other sorrows stalk menacing and unabashed through courts and palaces, and flinch nothing at the glitter of gold and purple, how can you doubt but that reason alone can daunt them? For what is all this life of ours? It is a struggle in the dark, and in this dark men are as children. They quake and quiver at they know not what, and start aside at objects which in the daylight they would only laugh at. Light then, more light,—this is the thing we need for the liberation of man; but it is not outer light, it is the inner light of reason—

> Of reason searching Nature's secret way,
> And not the sun, nor lucid darts of day.

And now mark, and I will explain to you the motions of the bodies of matter: how things are begotten and broken up again, and with what speed they go moving through the great void. For verily in movement all things about us are, perpetually wearing away, perpetually re-begotten. Some nations wax, others wane, and in a brief space the races of living things are changed, and, like runners, hand over the lamp of life.

Here Lucretius goes on to explain more in detail the everlasting motion of the atoms, the way they strike, the way

they rebound, and the ways in which they become intertangled. They move, he says, as the motes move in a sunbeam, which you may see streaming through a dark chamber, and in the apparent void mingle in the light of the rays, and, as in never-ending conflict, skirmish and give battle, combating in troops and never halting, driven about in frequent meetings and partings, so that you may guess from this what it is for first beginnings of things to be for ever tossing about in the great void. So far as it goes, a small thing may give an illustration of a great thing, and put you on the track of knowledge.

Now how swiftly [he continues] these atoms move, Memmius, you may learn from this:—

> When first the morning sprinkles earth with light,
> And in the forest's lone heart everywhere
> The birds awaken, and with fluttering flight
> Pour out their flutings on the tender air;

—at such a time we see how in a moment, in a single moment, the sun, far off though he be, darts his light through the whole creation, and clothes everything with his brightness. But the sun's rays have to travel through air, and the air retards their course; and therefore they move slowly when compared with the atoms, which move only through pure and empty space, and which hurry on and on, not held back by anything.

But some, ignorant of the nature of matter, say that without the providence of the gods the world could not have come to be what it has, nor the seasons vary in such nice conformity to the ways of men. Wanderers they from the true course of reason. For even if I did not know what first beginnings were, I could still maintain that the earth and heaven were never the work of any divine intelligence,—so great are the defects with which they stand encumbered. All which, Memmius, I will by-and-by make clear to you; but we will now go on to explain what is yet to be told of motions.

Lucretius now goes on to deal with the primary downward tendency of atoms, and to account for the upward courses they take, through blows and reboundings, and being squeezed upwards out of solidifying substances. Next he explains that uncertain sideways movement, which is the one respect in which the uniformity of atomic movement is broken, and which he here proclaims to be the origin, and the only possible origin, of the free-will of living beings.

Then he goes on to explain that the laws of matter have been the same for ever; that it is the nature of matter to be for ever moving; and that though things seem to be now at rest, their atoms are still as unresting as they were at the beginning. Nor need you wonder at this, he says; for when mighty legions fill in their courses all the places of the plains, in the mimicry of war, the glitter of them lifts itself up to the sky, and the whole earth about glitters with brass, and a noise is made beneath by the trampling of the mighty ones, and the mountains smitten by the shouting hurl the voices upwards to the stars of heaven, and all the wheeling horsemen scour the plains, and make them tremble with the charge:—

> Yet some space is there in the far-off hills
> Whence all this storm of chargers seems to rest,
> A still light brooding on the broad plain's breast.

Lucretius now goes on to show that the atoms must be of various shapes, the kinds of things produced by them are so different,—fluids, solids, and airs, tastes and smells. Were not the seeds of different shapes, and each special substance made of special seeds, how could the species of animals remain alike, and never vary? or how could parent transmit to child that special something by which the two mutually recognise each other? For this we see that even the beasts can do; and they are just as well known to each other as human beings are.

> Thus oft before our pillared sanctuaries,
> When the lit altars lift their fragrant blaze,
> A calf pours forth its warm life's blood, and dies;
> But she, the mother, in her lone amaze

Goes through the fields, and still can recognize
  Her own one's cloven footfalls in the ways,
And looks to find it, and her eyes grow wild
With wondering for her unreturning child.

Then from her mouth breaks forth the desolate moan
  Through all the leafy groves, and she gives o'er
Her search, only she oft goes back alone
  To that bleak stall her child shall know no more;
Nor tender willows, nor lush grasses grown
  Sweet with the dew-fall, nor clear streams that pour
With brimming lips their waves along the plain,
Can tempt her mouth, nor ease her breast of pain.

Remember then, says Lucretius, that the atoms have various shapes; but the number of such shapes is finite, though of atoms of each shape the number must be infinite: for since the difference of shape is finite, those which are like are infinite, or the sum of matter will be finite. All this he draws out at length, urging all the arguments that have been described already.

And thus, he says, out of infinite matter, and through infinite space, things as they are continue, for ever being destroyed and for ever again renewed; nor can death-dealing motions keep the mastery always, nor entomb existence for evermore, nor, on the other hand, can the birth and increase-giving motions of things preserve them always after they are born.

Thus from the depths of all eternity
  The unwearying atoms wage a dubious war;
And now with surging life doth victory lie,
  And now anon is death the conqueror;
And with the funeral wail, the baby's cry
  Blends, as it opes its eyes on daylight's shore:
Nor ever morning broke that failed to hear
The infant's bleatings and the mourner's tear.

And herein, Memmius, it is most fit you should remember that there is nothing that is known by sense that consists of one kind of seed; all is formed by a mixture of divers atoms. And when a thing has many properties, you must know it is

a compound of seeds of many shapes. Such a compound is the great earth we live on, for her properties, as we can all see, are many. For she brings forth fires, and the great seas, and crops, and joyous trees, and the bodies of living things. Wherefore, of gods, and men, and beasts, she alone has been named the mother. Of her the Greek poets sang, that, borne on her towering chariot, she comes driving a yoke of lions. They have yoked to her car the beasts, to show that nature, however savage, should be softened by the care of parents. They have crowned her head with a mural crown, because, fortified in strong positions, she sustains cities. Phrygian bands escort her, for in Phrygia the story is that the first corn grew; and Galli, too, are her guardians, to show that they who have done violence to the divinity of the mother, are unworthy to bring a living offspring to the daylight.

The tight-stretched timbrels thunder round her way,
  The sounding cymbals clash, and cry Prepare!
The threatening horns with hoarser music bray,
  And hollow pipes are loud upon the air;
And swords are borne before her, sharp to slay—
  Emblems of rage to thankless souls that dare
Neglect the Queen; till holy fear has birth
Of the great Mother over all the earth.

Therefore when first she slowly comes progressing
  Through mighty cities, and with soundless tongue
Breathes over men the dumb unworded blessing,
  Down in her path are brass and silver flung,
A bounteous largess, mortal thanks expressing;
  And flowers are showered by all the adoring throng,
Till on the Mother and her train there falls
A snowstorm of soft-settling rose-petals.

But all this escort and progress are only symbolism. It is beautifully told and well set forth, but it is very far removed from true reason. For the nature of the gods must enjoy supreme repose, and know neither care nor labour; for no pain mars it, nor can aught we do appease it or make it angry. And if any one choose to call the sea Neptune, and

corn Ceres, and would rather use the word Bacchus than the word wine, let us suffer him to say in this sense that the earth is mother of gods, if he only forbears in earnest to sully his soul with the stain of foul religion.

> For all this while the earth is blind and dumb,
> It neither knows, nor thinks, nor hears, nor feels,
> But blindly in it various seeds unite,
> And blindly these break forth, and reach the light.

But though all things, Lucretius goes on, are composed of many seeds, it is evident that these combinations follow some laws, and only certain set combinations are possible by the nature of things. The uniformity of nature shows us this; and you may learn it, too, from considering what the atoms are themselves. You must know, too, that first beginnings have themselves no sensible qualities. In especial, you must remember that they are without colour. Lucretius gives many reasons for this,—more particularly, that colour cannot exist without light, and that it varies according to what way the light falls upon it.

> After this fashion does the ringdove's down
> Change in the sun, and shift its plumy sheen;
> Now all a poppy's dark vermilion,
> Now coral, glimmering over emerald green.
> So too the peacock, saturate with sun
> O'er all its sweep of trailing tail, is seen
> To quiver in the light with varying dyes,
> And all the hues inconstant in its eyes.

Lucretius goes on with his reasons why atoms cannot have either voice, or smell, or sense, or any sensible qualities whatsoever. Life has arisen out of the lifeless, as we see even now worms arising out of clods, though in the case of the higher animals the lifeless matter has to go through many stages: and only through special combinations of circumstances can it at last break forth into life and consciousness. But if any one shall say that sense may be so far begotten out of no-sensation, by a process of change or by a kind of

birth, all we have to show to such a man is, that this change and birth can only happen in obedience to fixed laws, and under fixed conditions. Above all, the senses cannot exist in any body, till the living nature of that body has been begotten; for till then, the atoms that will make up the principles of life and feeling are wandering far and wide—in air and earth, in flowers and trees and rivers. Common-sense will tell you that all this must be so. For did the atoms live, what then? Think of the picture you would have to form of them.

Sure, had they life, these seeds of things, why then
Each separate particle would laugh and cry
By its small self, and speculate like men—
What were my own first seeds, and whence am I?

Wherefore be assured, Memmius, that we have all arisen out of lifeless things—

And learn
That what of us was taken from the dust
Will surely one day to the dust return;
And what the air has lent us, heaven will bear
Away and render back its own to air.

For death is not an extinction of matter,—it is a change and a dissolution only. The atoms are like the letters of an alphabet, for ever shifting their places, and clustering into new words, and these words again clustering into new verses.

And now, we entreat you, apply your mind to reason. For a new matter struggles earnestly to gain your ears; and remember this, that the simplest thing, if new, is at first hard to be realised; and the hardest thing grows easy when we have known it long enough.

Lift up your eyes, consider the blue sky,
And all the multitudes of wandering signs
It holds within its hollows; mark on high
How shines the sun, and how the clear moon shines.
Supposing this great vision suddenly
Broke on the gaze of man, my soul divines
That to the astonished nations it would seem
A mist, a fancy, a desire, a dream.

And yet how little, it is so familiar, do we now heed it! Wonder not, therefore, if I lead your spirit on a farther and a more adventurous voyage, and carry you past the walls of heaven and the bounding blue, and show you what is there, far yonder, in the bottomless unplumbed depths, to which the spirit ever yearns to look forward, and to which the mind's inner self reaches in free and unhindered flight. There then, in the space beyond, where the atoms are for ever flying, are other worlds than ours, woven as ours was out of flying atoms, and the blind clash of them. Our universe is but one out of a countless number. As a man is but one amongst many men, so is our universe but one amongst many universes. And through all these runs a single law. They have risen in the same way, they are sustained in the same way; and in the same way, and by a like necessity, they will all one day perish. Do but realise this, and the whole scheme of things will grow clearer to you, and you will see how—

Rid of her haughty masters, straight with ease
  Does nature work, and willingly sustains
Her frame, and asks no aid of deities.
  For of those holy gods who haunt the plains
Of Ether, and for aye abide in peace,
  I ask, could such as they are hold the reins
Of all the worlds, or in their courses keep
The forces of the immeasurable deep?

Whose are the hands could make the stars to roll
  Through all their courses, and the fruitful clod
Foster the while with sunlight, always whole,
  A multiplied but undivided god;
And strike with bellowing thunders from the pole,
  Now his own temples, now the unbending sod;
And now in deserts those vain lightnings try
That strike the pure, and pass the guilty by?

And this too, Memmius, you must know as well. Each of these countless universes has grown from small to greater, and the bulk of them has been added to by seeds dropped down upon them out of the boundless space; and, in

like manner, they are diminished and divided, for their seeds get loose, and the boundless space receives them back again. And as plants and animals are born, increase in stature and in strength, and then wax old and die, so is it with the worlds also. And this world of ours, as many a sign shows us, is now well stricken in years, and the time of its dissolution is drawing nigh. With each return of its seasons its strength gets more feeble. Once goodly crops and grasses sprang from the teeming soil without labour. Now, labour as we will, but a scant reward is yielded. And now the aged ploughman shakes his head, and sighs to think of the earth's exuberance in the days when he was young. And the sorrowful planter complains of his shrivelled vines, and wearies heaven with his prayers, and comprehends not that all things are gradually wasting away, and passing to the grave, quite worn out by age and length of days.

BOOK III

INVOCATION TO EPICURUS

Thou who wert first in drowning depths of night
To lift aloft so clear a lamp, whose rays
Strike along life, and put the shades to flight—
Thee, thee, chief glory of the Grecian race,
I strive to follow, humbly and aright,
And my feet in thy very footprints place;
Not that thy rival I would dare to be,
But that I love, and loving follow thee.

Thy rival! Nay; can swallows rival swans?
Or thunder-footed steeds competitors
Find 'mongst the she-goat's gamb'ling little ones?
Oh, first and best of all discoverers,
We are but bees along the flowery lawns,
Who rifle for our food thy fields of verse,
And on thy golden maxims pause and prey—
All-gold, and worthy to endure for aye.

For lo! no sooner does thy powerful line
Loud through the world the scheme of Nature sing,

Than the mind hears, and at that note of thine
  Its flocks of phantom terrors take to wing.
The world's walls rot apart, and I divine
  With opened eyes the ways of everything,
And how through Nature's void immensity
Things were not, were, and are, and cease to be.

And lo! the gods appear, the immortal races,
  Visible in the lucent windless air
That fills their quiet blest abiding-places,
  Which never noisy storm nor storm-clouds dare
To trouble, where the frost's tooth leaves no traces,
  And downwards no white falling snowflakes fare,
But on their lips the laughters never cease,
Nor want nor pain invades their ageless peace.

But on the other hand we search in vain,
  For those swart forms, the fearful deities
Of Hell. Our vision roams the whole inane,
  But aught like Acheron it nowhere sees.
And I, when I to this high view attain,
  Feel on my soul a maddening rapture seize,
And next a trembling, that thy hand should dare
Thus to the quick to lay all Nature bare.

And now, says Lucretius, since I have shown what atoms are, their number, their shape, and their motions, and how all things can be produced out of them, I will next reveal the nature of the mind and soul that the dream of Acheron may be once and for all dispelled, which at present troubles life to its inmost depth, casts a chill and deathly shade over our whole existence, and leaves a taint and a bitterness in every pleasure. True it is that we often hear men vaunt that they have no fear of death, and that the ills and hardships of life are all they really flinch from. But these are merely boasters. Bring them into any trouble or danger, and you will see how they betake themselves to their knees, whining to their gods, and forgetful of all their bravery. Such fearless firmness as these men feign to have, can be given only by knowledge and calm reason. Listen to me, then, and I will lead you to it:—

First, then, I say the mind, which often we
  Call also understanding, wherein dwells
The power that rules our whole vitality,
  Is part of man, as is whatever else
Goes to make up his frame, as hands, feet, knees;
  Nor is it, as a foolish Greek school tells,
A harmony of all the members, spread
As health is, everywhere from feet to head.

But it resides in one particular place, just as sight, hearing, and smell do. Lucretius here goes on in detail to explain the nature of the mind, how it is connected with the vital soul, and how the two are connected with the body, how they govern it and are contained by it, how the former is seated in heart, and how the latter pervades the whole frame. He then describes how the mind touches the soul and moves it, and how the soul in turn touches the body; and from this he argues that they must of necessity be corporeal, for where there is no corporeality, there is no touch. With first beginnings, then, he says, interlaced from their earliest birth, are mind and body fashioned, and gifted with a life of joint partnership; and it is plain that the faculty of the body and of the mind cannot feel separately, each alone without the power of the other, but sense is kindled throughout our flesh and blown into a flame between the two, by joint motions on the part of both.

And now (he goes on) I will show you that mind and soul are mortal; and in what I have now to say, remember that I still use the words mind and soul indifferently, and that what I say of the one will apply in the same way to the other, since both make up one thing, and are one single substance. First of all, then, remember of how fine a substance I have shown the soul to be, and how far more sensitive than any other thing,—

More than a drifting smoke, or ductile river;
  For even shapes of mists and smoke in dreams,
Soon as they touch the mind will make it quiver,
  As when in sleep the votive altar steams
Before our sight; for even dreams like these
Come from the touch of films and images.

Well, then, since you see that water is scattered when the vessel that held it is broken, and the mists melt away into the air, how can you doubt that the soul will one day do likewise when its body goes to pieces? Again, we see that the mind is born with the body, grows strong with the body, and also with the body once more grows frail and feeble:—

> It follows then that when this life is past,
> It goes an outcast from the body's door,
> And dies like smoke along the driving blast.
> We with the flesh beheld it born and rise
> To strength; and with the flesh it fades and dies.

And now consider this too. The body is subject to many diseases, and with many of these the soul is affected also. Often the reason wanders, often the reason is for a time quite slain. Such loss of reason comes from the powers of the mind and soul being dissevered, and riven and forced asunder by the same baneful malady as the body is. What shall we think then?—

> Even in the body thus the soul is troubled
> And scarce can hold its fluttering frame together;
> How should it live then, when, with force redoubled,
> Naked it feels the air and angry weather?

Again, Lucretius goes on, seeds of the soul are evidently left in the body after death, because worms and living things are bred out of it. And a soul that can be thus divided cannot be immortal. For it is impossible to think that each of these worms has an immortal soul of its own, that immediately at the birth of its body makes its way into it, and that thus many thousands of souls meet together in a place from which one has been withdrawn, and either find bodies ready made for them, or set each about making a body for itself. This is glaringly absurd:—

> For why should souls, if they can cast away
> Their mortal carcasses, and still live on,
> Thus toil to build themselves a den of clay?
> Since when with bodies they are clothed upon

They straight grow heirs to sickness and decay,
And through them all the body's grief has gone.
Nor for themselves could souls contrive to build
Such prison-pens, how much soe'er they willed.

Lucretius here brings forward several other arguments, and then he once more thus returns to this one:—

Again, when creatures' bodies are preparing,
Sure we should laugh to see the souls stand by—
Bands of immortals at each other glaring
About that mortal house in rivalry,
Each longing he may be the first to fare in,
And each braced up to push his best and try.
Unless they settle it on this condition,
That who comes first shall have the first admission.

Again, if more arguments are still needed, for everything there is a fixed place appointed; nor do fishes live in the land, trees in the clouds, nor the sap of trees in stones. And thus the nature of mind cannot come into being without the body, nor exist away from it. And therefore, when the body has died, we must admit that the soul is perished. Every argument points to this conclusion. We cannot doubt it; we cannot escape from it. Analogy, observation, and common-sense, all point the same way, and confirm us in a complete certitude:—

Death is for us then but a noise and name,
Since the mind dies, and hurts us not a jot;
As in bygone times when Carthage came
To battle, we and ours were troubled not,
Nor heeded though the whole earth's shuddering frame
Reeled with the stamp of armies, and the lot
Of things was doubtful, to which lords should fall
The land and seas and all the rule of all;

So, too, when we and ours shall be no more,
And there has come the eternal separation
Of flesh and spirit, which, conjoined before,
Made us ourselves, there will be no sensation;

We should not hear were all the world at war;
Nor shall we, in its last dilapidation,
When the heavens fall, and earth's foundations flee.
We shall nor feel, nor hear, nor know, nor see.

And even—if for a moment we may imagine the impossible—even should the soul still survive the body, what is that to us? For we are neither soul nor body, but we are a single being fashioned out of the wedlock of the two. Nor, again, if time should gather up our matter after death, and again remould it into the very beings we now are, that is nothing to us, when once the chain of our consciousness has been snapped asunder. Perhaps we may have existed before: that gives us no sorrow. Suppose we can exist again: this need give us no more trouble than that.

Therefore, when you see a man bemoaning his hard case, that after death his body will either rot in the grave, or be consumed by fire, or be torn by wild beasts, the sound his mouth gives forth betrays a flaw somewhere. He does not really grant the conclusion he professes to grant. He has not with his whole mind realised that he will wholly die. The inveterate fancy still clings to him that there will still be a surviving something, that living will lament about its own death:—

Perplexed he argues, from the fallacy
Of that surviving self not wholly freed.
Hence he bewails his bitter doom—to die;
Nor does he see that when he dies indeed,
No second he will still remain to cry,
Watching its own cold body burn or bleed.
O fool! to fear the wild-beast's ravening claw,
Or that torn burial of its mouth and maw.

For lo! if this be fearful, let me learn
Is it more fearful than if friends should place
Thy decent limbs upon the pyre and burn
Sweet frankincense? or smother up thy face
With honey in the balm-containing urn?
Or if you merely lay beneath the rays
Of heaven on some cold rock? or damp and cold
If on thine eyelids lay a load of mould?

"Thou not again shalt see thy dear home's door,
Nor thy dear wife and children come to throw
Their arms round thee, and ask for kisses more,
And through thy heart make quiet comfort go:
Out of thy hands hath slipped the precious store
Thou hoardest for thine own," men say, "and lo,
All thou desired is gone!" but never say,
"All the desires as well hath passed away."

Ah! could they only see this, and could borrow
True words, to tell what things in death abide thee!
"Thou shalt lie soothed in sleep that knows no morrow,
Nor ever cark nor care again betide thee:
Friend, thou wilt say thy long good-bye to sorrow,
And ours will be the pangs, who weep beside thee,
And watch thy dear familiar body burn,
And leave us but the ashes and the urn."

Often, too, at feasts men say, as they drink, and wreathe their garlands round them, "Miserable creatures that we are! our joys are short; they will soon be part and parcel of the past, and the past never gives its own back again." As if after death they would ever know thirst, and be pining for the wine-cup that will never more be allowed them!

Once more, could Nature only speak to us, how would she deride us foolish mortals and reprove us! "Fools," she would say, "and sickly sorrowers! why bemoan and wail for death in this wise? For say thy past life has been welcome to thee, and all its joys have not been given in vain, passing through thee like a leaky vessel that refuses to be filled—say thou hast had thy will and thy fill of living:—

Why not rise up then, like a sated guest,
And enter, fool, upon thy dreamless rest?

But if, on the contrary, life has been a sorrow to thee, and all the blessings that have been thine thou hast squandered, why seek to re-begin the weary round, and to gather what again thou wilt waste and squander as before? For hope not to find anything new. There is no other pleasure that I can contrive or discover for thee:

For though thy life be fresh within thy frame,
Nor years have yet thy bodily strength abated,
You would find all things alway still the same,
Nor e'er discover one thing new created—
Nor shouldst thou live till all men's lives be done,
For there is no new thing beneath the sun.

Think, too, of the bygone antiquity of the everlasting time before our birth, how that was nothing to us. For nature holds up to us the time that was before us, as a vision of the future time that is to come after us.

Look in the glass then. Say what shape is there?
Appears there aught of terrible or sad?
Does not the image that you gaze at seem
Even gentler than a sleep without a dream.

Sure enough, however, the terrors men dread after death are not all vain imaginings. Birds truly eat a way into Tityos; Sisyphus rolls his stone up-hill for ever. But he is a Tityos, who, as he grovels in lust, is eaten up by anguish like a vulture; and he is a Sisyphus who is for ever asking honours of the people, and is for ever going back disappointed. The torments that we dreamed of in the future have their real being here, and men inflict them on themselves, in this very life around us.

Ah! might men only see the real cause of their sorrows, how salvation would then dawn on them! The man who is sick of home hurries forth from his lordly porticos, and then, again, hurries back, finding he is no better off abroad. In the town he says, Ah, would I were in the country! and in the country, Ah, would I were in the town! and to and fro between the two he goes hurrying in his chariot, and at each end of his journey he can do nothing but yawn for weariness. In this way each man flies from himself, but can never for a moment escape; and he hates himself, being sick with an unknown malady. But could he only see the matter rightly, leaving all else, he would study the nature of things; and learning that certain extinction and death is the end of all, would learn so to order his life accordingly.

BOOK IV

And now since I have shown you what mind and soul is, and how life is born with this body, and dies with the body's death, I will go on to explain to you a matter of the utmost moment; I will show you how we see, and feel, and taste, and how our life is connected with and knows the external world. And hard though the subject be, I will make it sweet to you, overlaying all its bitterness with the sweet honey of the Muses.

Lucretius now goes on to explain how films and images are perpetually streaming off the surface of things, and illustrates this by many analogies. For without doubt, he says, we see many things freely giving such discharge, not from the centre only, but from the outer surface itself.

> This daily happens, when the sunlight gleams
> Through those broad awnings, yellow, red, and blue,
> Which flap and flutter on their poles and beams
> Over great theatres: for there you view
> How from their surface down their colour streams,
> And how they make to flicker with their hue
> The curving crowd, and all the scene's recesses,
> And the grave fathers in their stately dresses.
>
> And all the more the narrowing walls around
> Make of the theatre a well of night,
> So much more gaily do the colours bound,
> And every object laughs with wayward light.

And therefore, he says, since sheets of canvas discharge colour from their surface, all things will naturally discharge their pictures too—since, in each case alike they are sent forth from the surface. Nor are you to suppose that only those images are going through the air, which are thus sent off the surface of things. There are other images, with no counterparts, which spontaneously beget and fashion themselves, as clouds do, and wander along as clouds do, with ever-varying and inconstant shape. For the clouds in this way we can see continually

Fanning the air, and, gathering form on high,
Blot out the blue, and violate the sky;

Then through the air in shifting shapes are born:
Now see we monstrous giants hurrying past,
Who trail behind them lengths of shade forlorn;
And now great mountains move along the blast,
And crags and boulders from the mountains torn,
By which the sun's dimmed face is overcast;
And now some mighty beast comes on amain
With packs of other storm-clouds in its train.

And now I will go on to show with what ease and celerity the images or idols that I spoke of are begotten, and how incessantly they flow and fall away from things. Hereupon he explains more minutely the nature of these emanations, how fine their substance is, and consequently with what swiftness they are capable of moving:—

For we observe that things of little weight
Are ever swift to move, of the which kind
The sunlight is, which does not hesitate,
Ever pressed on by fresh light from behind,
To force its way, and nimbly penetrate
Through all the space of air.

And these idols or images of things are in their movements as swift as sunlight, and can pass through air as readily,—nay, they must be even swifter; for the stars are farther from us than the sun, and yet

No sooner is the shine of water spread
In the night air, beneath heaven's glittering plain,
Than instantly to every star o'erhead
A star within the wave responds again.

Therefore, again and again, I repeat, you must admit that bodies, capable of striking the eyes and provoking vision, are constantly travelling through the air with a marvellous velocity. But because we can see with the eyes alone, the consequence is, that to whatever point we turn our sight, then all

the same things meet and strike us with their shape and colour. Lucretius now goes on to explain the manner in which we infer the distance of things, and then the action of mirrors, and the real nature of the reflection in them. He then passes to optical delusions, and the various ways in which it seems that our eyes deceive us:—

Now for this cause the far towers of a town
  Reach us as round, when they indeed are square;
The angles of their films are quite worn down
  In drifting towards us through the length of air;
And when they meet us, those strong things of stone
  Seem smooth and circular, as though they were
Turned in a lathe; but vaguely thus appear,
And like a shadowy sketch of round things near.

And there are numberless other like cases as well, but they can be all explained satisfactorily, and we must never for a moment admit that our eyes deceive us. The frailty, the sense of deception, is really in the mind. Do but think of the following instances, and you will see that this is so:—

The ship in which we sail seems standing still,
  The ship that rides at anchor drifting by;
And, as we hold to seaward, field and hill
  Seem to drop far astern; and in the sky
The stars we steer by seem immovable,
  And yet go moving on assiduously,
Since each clear body has its hour to rise,
And its long road to rest across the skies.

And as we watch the sun and moon, their light
  Seems also fixed, yet still moves on we know:
And when on deck we watch with straining sight,
  Up from the sea-line shadowy mountains go,
Into one solid isle their shapes unite,
  And yet we know huge straits between them flow,
And ways for fleets. And giddy children view,
When they stop turning, all things turning too.

So, too, the sun seems near us when it rises, and yet illimitable lands and seas and unknown people lie between.

A puddle of not a finger's depth seems to contain the whole great heaven. As we pause on horseback in a river-ford, the river seems to be standing still, and ourselves to be carried violently up the stream. A portico is supported on equal pillars, and yet as we look through it their height seems to be dwindling, and the floor seems to be rising, till they meet in a vanishing-point. Oars we know to be straight; and yet dip them in the water, and their submerged part will seem to be bent and broken:—

> So, too, we seem when chained in sleep profound
> To move in daylight, footing field and hill,
> Sailing new seas, and treading alien ground;
> And when the earnest night is deep and still,
> Our ears are loud with many a fancied sound.

And many other marvellous things are there, which would seek to shake the credit of the senses: but in vain; for it is not the senses that deceive us, but we who deceive ourselves, by wrongly interpreting what they rightly tell us. Again—

> If a man hold that nothing can be known,
> He knows not whether he can know this even,
> Since he admits the things he knows are none.
> He stands with head on earth, and feet in heaven,
> And I decline to talk with such an one.

No—such scepticism as this is utterly suicidal. The senses are all we can take our stand on, and they are unerring guides.

And now, says Lucretius, I will explain the action of the other senses. Sounds, in the first place, are streams of atoms, whose shape varies with the quality of the sound:—

> Nor are the first beginnings of like form
> Which pierce the ears in crabbed sounds and sweet,
> As when in air the braying trumpets storm
> Which rouse barbarian nations to their feet,
> And when its carol comes from the wild swan
> Over the headlong floods of Helicon.

When we speak, we force our voices out of the depth of our bodies, and the tongue gives their shape to them just as they are leaving our lips. Words travel a certain distance keeping their clear shape; gradually this becomes obliterated. No sooner is a voice uttered, than it starts asunder into many voices; and this is the way in which a whole assembly hears the words of a single speaker. Voices which do not strike directly on the ear are carried away and lost, or else striking on something solid are thrown back again:—

Which knowing, you may to yourself explain,
And to your friends the explanation tell,
How it is that the rocks give back again
Our syllables in many a lonely dell;
And how, when in the dusk we call in vain
For our strayed friends, the hills grow voluble,
And their familiar names are tossed about
From slope to slope in many a lipless shout.

I have seen places where to one such call,
Straight six or seven voices would reply,
In such a wise did every rocky wall
One to the other make our utterance fly;
And then the others, likewise, one and all
Would toss them back in answer presently.
In spots like these, the village people tell
That the shy nymphs and goat-foot satyrs dwell.

And there, too, say they, lurk the haunting fauns,
Who make strange noises through the night profound,
Playing quaint pranks amongst the shadowy lawns,
With twangling lyres, and pipes of plaintive sound.
Also, they hear god Pan, when spring-time dawns,
Come, that wild head of his with pine-boughs bound,
To touch the reeds with crooked mouth, and fling
Their song of sylvan music to the spring.

Now, to proceed, you need not wonder how
It is that voices come and beat the ears
Through things through which the eyesight cannot go.
Because of this the reason plain appears—

Full many a thing that lets the voice go through,
The visual film to thousand pieces tears,
'Tis of so fine a texture.

Lucretius now proceeds to give that account of the remaining senses, of dreams, of the imagination, and of the way in which external things act as a stimulus to the mind, and the mind again acts as a stimulus to the body, which has been already explained at length. He then goes on to describe the nature of love, which he treats of simply as a form of physical excitement. This pleasure, he says, is for us Venus; from that desire is the Latin name of love—from that desire has first trickled into the heart yon drop of Venus's honeyed joy, destined to be followed soon by chilly care. For though that which you yearn for is away, yet images of it are at hand, and its sweet name is present to the ears. But it is meet to fly such images, and scare away all that feeds love, and not keep your thoughts set upon one object, and so lay up for yourself care and unfailing pain. For the sore gathers strength, and becomes inveterate by feeding. For love, says Lucretius, is a fierce madness, a hungry longing, that will be satiated, and will always leave you craving. For its sake young men waste their strength and ruin themselves, and their whole life is passed at the beck of another:—

Meanwhile their substance wastes and runs away
Turned into coverlets from Babylon;
Their duties are neglected day by day,
And all their noble name is quite undone.
Meanwhile upon her brow green emeralds play,
Glancing in gold, and shoes from Sicyon
Deck her elastic feet; and tears and traces
Are on her crumpled robe of love's embraces.

And all the wealth their good sires toiled to gain
Changes to head-gear, and rich anadem,
And Cean robes with trailing sweep of train,
And feasts, and goblets thick with many a gem,
And unguents, games, and garlands. All in vain!
They have their canker in the heart of them.
A bitter something, in the midmost hours
Of joy, starts up, and stings amongst the flowers.

Either because they burn to see how they
In foul embraces and effeminate
Slay their own selves, and waste their strength away;
Or else the dainty lips, on whom their fate
Hangs, some slight word of doubtful meaning say,
Which stings their heart like fire; or soon or late
They think her eyes are roaming, to beguile
Others, and catch the footprints of a smile.

And these evils are the evils of love when it is successful. How much greater are those of love that is crossed and hopeless! So that it is best to watch beforehand, that you be never entangled in the snare. And yet even when you are entangled you may escape, unless you stand in your own way, and refuse resolutely to observe all those vices of mind and body which you may be quite sure will abound in her, woo whom you will. For this is what men do for the most part, blinded by passion, and attribute to their loved ones beauties that are not really theirs.

Muddy complexions have a dusky spell,
A lover says. A slut's a natural creature,
A romping hoyden seems a slim gazelle;
A sharp-tongued spitfire dazzles like a meteor.
See, in yon slow and cumbrous movements dwell
A queenly pride; that face, without a feature,
Is strangely touching; and this fat plump chit
Is, top to toe, the very soul of wit.

Lucretius goes on, something in the temper of Pope, to describe how different is

Cynthia at her toilet's greasy task,
To Cynthia fragrant at an evening masque,

and he draws a humours contrast between the scene at the toilet indoors, when the lady is putting the last delicate stroke to her charms, with her maid behind her tittering at the whole process, and the lover outside at the threshold full of yearning for the adored one, and thinking sacred for her sake the very house that holds her.

And yet, says Lucretius in conclusion, it is not all love that is thus vain and deluding: some women have a genuine passion for their lovers or their husbands; and often a wife, though of but small beauty, will by her gentle manners win the heart of a man, and custom will habituate him to pass his life with her, and love will set its mark on his heart at last, as dripping water will at last make a hole in a stone.

BOOK V

TO EPICURUS

Where is the bard whose verse avails to tell
  Of themes like these—of Nature's ways sublime?
Or who shall so the power of verse compel
  As fitly to resound his praise in rhyme,
Who all those spoils, that to his own hand fell,
  Hath left us as an heirloom for all time,
Making us wise for ever? Truly none,
Unless indeed it be a god alone.

For, Memmius, if 'tis pleasing in thine eyes
  To speak the plain unvarnished truth of things,
The author of these great discoveries—
  He was a god of gods, a king of kings.
For first through him men grew what men call wise,
  And from him every rule of prudence springs,
Who towed our life out of the storms and night,
And moored us in the tranquil calm and light.

What, compared to his discoveries, are those of other discoverers? Ceres, it is said, gave corn to us, and Bacchus wine. But we could have lived on happily without either of these, and many a nation does so even now. But unless the breast is clear, no life can be happy; and hence he, Epicurus our mighty master, is rightly held a god by us, since from him come those sweet mental solaces which are even now spreading in the world, and soothing the hearts of men.

Yea, and our master therefore did far more
  Than vaunted Hercules. For how should we

Fear the Nemean lion's rage and roar,
  Or that great bull in Crete beyond the sea,
Or all the bristles of the Arcadian boar,
  Or what to us could snaky hydras be?
Or how would Gorgon fight us from his gloom,
Or those Stymphalian birds with brazen plume?

Or that great dragon which for ever keeps
  The shining fruitage of the Hesperides,
With fierce and vigilant eye that never sleeps,
  Couched 'neath the shadow of the charmed trees,
Whilst round the midmost stem his huge coil creeps—
  How should he harm us by his far-off seas,
  The Atlantic shore, and the abhorred waves
Which even the wild barbarian never braves?

And all the other monsters of like kind that have been conquered, what harm, I ask, could they do us were they even now living? None, methinks—neither these, nor the like of these. But unless the breast is cleared, it itself is full of monsters; rather let us be afraid of them, and honour and glorify him who put them first to rout.

Wherefore, walking in his footsteps, I will tell you in order how the world arose, and what laws it obeyed in rising. I will show you that it had a birth, and that death is also in store for it. I will tell you how the heaven is formed, and the earth also, the moon and stars, and how living creatures emerged out of lifeless matter; and I will show you how all things are held and fettered by immutable laws and boundaries:—

Well, not to dally more with things unproven,
  Look round you, on the heaven, the earth, the sea,
The triple thread of which the world is woven,
  Three bodies, Memmius, such a different three.
A day shall come when these shall all be cloven,
  And all the things that are shall cease to be,
And blown like dust upon a stormy wind,
The whole world melt, nor leave a wrack behind.

If you doubt how this can be, consider the power of earthquakes, and how in a few moments all things near are shattered by them:—

But these may fortune banish from our path,
Nor with such signs see fit to assure our faith.

But before I go on to sing you the sure oracle, the doom and the destruction that await this whole universe, I will again pause a moment and sustain your trembling mind, lest religion should still make you think that the world will endure for ever, and that all who should seek to prove otherwise shall suffer punishment, like a fresh race of Titans labouring to undermine the world. For what life or sense is there in the sea, the sun, the moon, that they should heed or hear what men say about them? How can they possibly have any life or passions in them? For we have seen what life is. It cannot exist without a fleshly body; and even in that body it can live only in a certain part.

Then, too, you cannot possibly believe that the gods exist in any parts of the world. Their fine nature is far withdrawn from our senses; the mind itself hardly sees them. We cannot touch them; and how then, I ask you, shall they touch us? What folly, too, to say that the gods have made the world, and set it in order, and arranged it for the use of man? In the first place, what could possibly induce them to take such trouble?—

What could they gain from such a race as ours?
Or what advantage could our gratitude
Yield these immortal and most blessed powers,
That they in aught should labour for our good?

Or what new incident could have broken in upon them, and made them desirous to change their former life? Or even if they wanted to make a world, where did they find any pattern to work by, and how did they set about the business? or how, again, did they ascertain the world-making capabilities of the atoms, unless Nature herself, mother of the gods, had shown the gods all that she herself could do?

But even had the science ne'er been mine
Of first beginnings, and how all began,
I could show clearly that no power divine
Helped at the work, and made the world for man;

So great the blunders in the vast design,
  So palpably is all without a plan.
For if 'twere made for us, its structure halts
In every member, full of flaws and faults.

Look at the earth; mark then, in the first place,
  Of all the ground the rounded sky bends over,
Forests and mountains fill a mighty space,
  And even more do wasteful waters cover,
And sundering seas; then the sun's deadly rays
  Scorch part, and over part the hard forests hover;
And Nature all the rest with weeds would spoil,
Unless man thwarted her with wearying toil.

Mark, too, the babe, how frail and helpless, quite
  Naked it comes out of its mother's womb,
A waif cast hither on the shores of light,
  Like some poor sailor, by the fierce sea's foam
Washed upon land; it lies in piteous plight,
  Nor speaks, but soon, as it beholds its home,
Bleats forth a bitter cry—oh meet presage
Of its life here, its woful heritage!

But the small younglings of the herds and flocks
  Are strong, and batten on the grass and dew.
They need no playthings, none their cradle rocks,
  Nor ask they with the seasons garments new.
They have no need of walls, and bars, and locks
  To guard their treasures; but for ever true
To them, the earth her constant bounty pours
Forth at their feet, and never stints her stores.

Lucretius now goes on to point out in detail the continual waste of everything that is visibly going on in the world around us, and to argue from this that of the whole there must be one day a like dissolution. Earth is for ever being dissolved in water, or broken into dust and being whirled away in air; water in its turn is being for ever drunk up by the sun; and the sun itself is for ever wasting its substance in swift emission of rays.

So you may see at night such earthly fire,
As hanging lamps, and torches blazing bright,
Darting their flames out, as with keen desire,—
Desire, I say, to feed the wasting light,
Which travelling, still doth on its path expire,
And would if not renewed be broken quite;
But to the dying rays succeed fresh rays,
And on the wall the light unpausing plays.

Again, too, you may see that even stones are conquered by time, high towers moulder and fall down crashing, and even the mountain-summits crumble to decay.

Think of this, too,—if the world was ever born, so surely will it perish. And it must have had a birthday—it cannot have been from everlasting, or else some record would have come to us of times before the Theban war and the fall of Pergamus.

Again, as I have shown that nothing is solid but the atoms, and that void is mixed up with all things, and that void and atoms alone can resist all force and are indestructible, you may be certain, you surely can no longer doubt, that the grave and gate of death is gaping for the whole universe.

Again, I have just shown you how all the elements of the world are engaged continually in a fierce intestine war; and to this struggle there must some day be an end,—either water, fire, or air will one day get the mastery, and then there will be the beginning of the end. Twice, indeed, even already, they feign that the battle has been wellnigh ended, and that water once was all but master; and once again that fire was, when Phaethon was whirled aloft in the sun's chariot—

And the boy's hands let go the dangling reins,
And the team tore across the ethereal plains.

But the almighty father, seized with ire,
Launched at the boy the all-dreaded thunderstone;
And as he fell, the Sun, the Sun his sire,
With rapid hand, from headlong Phaethon
Snatched the world's lamp of ever-burning fire,
And gathered up the reins, and one by one
He tamed the trembling steeds, and once again
Mounted his car, and gave new life to men.

And now, says Lucretius, I will tell you in what order the present world evolved itself. And he goes on to describe the first chaotic atom-storm, and the gradual massing together of the earth, and how it cast off from itself the blue heaven, as a kind of husk or covering, and then threw out the fires that make the moon, and stars, and all the other lights that are in the firmament. First an igneous ether, he says, went up from the earth's surface, which, sweeping round as fire, gradually formed the heavens.

> And this same ether rising, in its wake
> Full many a seed of vivid fire up-drew.
> Thus when we see the low red morning break
> Along the grasses rough and gemmed with dew,
> Does a grey mist go up from off the lake,
> And from the clear perennial river too;
> And even at times the very meadows seem
> From their green breast to breathe a silvery stream.

He now adds a number of details as to the formation of the earth's surface, which have been described already; and again refers to the onward changeless sweep of the ether, which keeps on its even way, unheeding all the turmoil and the storms in the lower air, between the earth and it.

> Onward it ever drives in changeless sweep;
> And how it still can so hold on and on
> The Pontic sea may teach you, which doth keep
> Ever due on, nor turns, for any force,
> Its icy current and compulsive course.

Upon this follows a long series of speculations on the motions of the sun and moon, the rest of the heavenly bodies, and the laws which govern the regular recurrence of the seasons, and the changing duration of the hours of light and darkness.

And now, he says, since I have explained in what way everything might go on throughout the blue vault of heaven, I will go back to the infancy of the world, and the tender age of the fields, and show what, in their first attempts at childbearing, they tried to raise.

Up to the shores of light, and gave them there
Into the keeping of the wandering air.

In the beginning, then, the clods gave forth
All kinds of herbage, and a verdant sheen
Was glossy on the hills; and flowery earth
Laughed over all her meadows glad and green:
Then bushes next, and trees of greater girth,
Orderly rising into air were seen;
Which things came forth spontaneous everywhere,
Like a bird's feathers or a horse's hair.

Then gradually, in the manner that has been described already, the earth gave birth to men, and animals, of the kinds that are now with us:—

But hardier far than we were those first races
Of men, since earth herself did them produce,
And braced them with a firmer frame than braces
Us now, and strung their arms with mightier thews.
Nor sun nor rain on them left any traces,
Nor sickness. And they never learned the use
Of arts, for ages: but like beasts they ran
Wild in the woods—the early race of man.

Their strong arms knew not how to guide the plough,
Or how to plunge the spade and till the plain,
Or from the trees to lop the failing bough.
But what the sun had given them, and the rain,
They took, and deemed it luxury enow.
Nor knew they yet the fatal greed of gain.
But in the woods they sought their simple store,
And stripped the trees, and never asked for more.

For thick the acorns in the forest grew,
And arbute-trees would yield the berried prize,
Which in the winter wears a scarlet hue;
And the earth bore these then of larger size;
And many another suchlike berry too,
It, from its yet unminished granaries,
Gave gladly forth, more than sufficing then
To appease the dawning wants of those poor men.

And like wild herds they clustered to the sound
  Of falling waters, loud in many a dell,
To slake their thirst; and as they roamed, they found
  The nymphs' green haunts, and there began to dwell;
For there sweet waters gushed from out the ground
  In living streams, and on the damp rocks fell—
The damp rocks, green with many a mossy stain—
Then slipt away, and babbled to the plain.

And they knew nought of fire, nor thought to fling
  The skins of beasts about their nakedness;
But the wild wood's roof was their covering,
  Or rugged mountain cave; and they would press
Into the brushwood, from the buffeting
  Of rain and storm, and all the weather's stress.
And nothing yet of rule or law they knew,
Nor how to keep the weal of all in view.

Whatever fortune threw in each man's way,
  That each bore off and hoarded as his own,
To grasp and clutch it as his proper prey,
  Aloof, and living for himself alone.
And naked in the woods the lovers lay,
  And by her lust or his each girl was won;
Or else by force; or bribed, she heard his suit,
By little gifts of acorns or ripe fruit.

And trusting in their strength of hands and feet,
  They would outstrip the wild beasts in the wood;
And some to death with ponderous clubs would beat,
  And hide from fiercer ones, who sought their blood:
And just where night, with noiseless step and fleet,
  O'ertook them, like the dull sow's bristly brood,
Down on the ground without a thought they lay,
And burrowing in the leaves slept sound till day.

And never waking in the dark, with fright
  Would they cry out, amazed for all the shade,
And beg the sun to bring them back the light.
  But stolid they would sleep, and undismayed,

Till rosy morning pleased to climb the height
Of heaven; for they, who from their birth surveyed
The light and dark alternate rise and fall,
Trusted the world, nor feared the end of all.

But this state of things did not last for ever. Progress began, and Lucretius here at length describes its advancing stages—the gradual discoveries of fire, of the use of the metals, of houses, of law, of monogamy, and all the other elements and influences of civilisation. And he then goes on to account for the rise of religion, attributing it, as has been already said, to two different causes—the sight of the wandering images of the gods' forms, and also to ignorance of the hidden forces of nature. Then when once this conception of the gods was formed—

They gave them dwellings in the heavenly light,
Far off and calm; because for aye appear
Through the high heaven to roll the moon and night,
Moon, day, and night, and all night's stars austere,
And trailing meteors, vagrant things of light,
And flying fires that wander far and near;
And because snows and hail and wind are there,
And the hoarse threats that thunder through the air.

O hapless race of men, exclaims Lucretius, when first they taxed the gods with having anything to do with this world of ours and its management! Little knew they the terror of the chains they were binding about themselves; what wounds, what tears they were preparing for their children's children! For still as we gaze at the vast world around us, the importunate fear will at times steal into our soul, that the power of the gods may be unlimited; and religion begins to raise its reawakening head.

Having made this digression, Lucretius again returns to his account of human progress, describing the rude, simple pleasures of our earliest ancestors, and warning us that luxuries, though inevitably found out one after one, and inevitably making us discontented with what went before, have made us no better pleased with the present, though they have made

us displeased with the past, and that with splendour and refinement have come envy and discontent, from which the simple savage early world was free. Mankind, he says, therefore, ever toils vainly and to no purpose, and wastes life in groundless cares, because men have never learnt what is the true end of getting, and up to what point true pleasure waxes. This by slow degrees has carried life out into the deep sea, and stirred up from their lowest depth the mighty billows of war.

And now all has been told,—how time by degrees brings each several thing before men's eyes, and reason raises it up into the borders of the light; for things in their due order must be thus advanced and brought forward, until they have arrived at the summit beyond which they can go no further.

BOOK VI

TO EPICURUS

Athens it was, Athens, most famous name,
  Who first gave corn to us, sick sons of earth;
And taught us countless arts, and how to frame
  Laws; but she gave her gift of chiefest worth,
When into life she sent that man of fame
  Out of whose mouth the words of truth welled forth.
Wherefore his glory through the world is spread,
And still he speaks though dumb, and lives being dead.

For when he saw that each most sore distress
  And craving of the flesh was satisfied,
And men forbore from wrong and lawlessness,
  And life became secure, and pomp and pride
And pleasures multiplied, yet none the less
  Each heart in secret ached, and each breast sighed,
And that for ever in the mind's despite
Were tears and pain our guests from morn to night;

He plainly saw that not the honeyed draught
  Of life itself did all this teen afford;
But 'twas the vessel out of which 'twas quaffed
  That spoiled whatever into it was poured;

Partly that through the potter's careless craft
It leaked; in part, that in its depths were stored
Some bitter dregs, that sent a taint through all
The sweets it held, of wormwood and of gall.

He therefore cleansed men's hearts with his truth-telling precepts, and placed a limit to lust and fear, and showed the chief good we should all strive to reach, and the narrow track that led to it. And he showed that the ills that plague men in this mortal life were ills that came from nature—from a blind chance or force, call it what we will. For the terror that heretofore had held men in bondage, and indeed still holds very many of them, is to be dispelled by reason, and by reason only:—

And now, since I have shown the ethereal plains
Of heaven are mortal, and the earth below,
And of all things that heaven or earth contains
The life and movement I have striven to show,
The goal draws near. But something yet remains
To tell. I have another mile to go:
And in the Muse's ear must mount on high,
'Mid storms and winds, and tell you how they fly.

For foolish mortals, one and all together,
Say that the calm high gods, by each caprice
Of fretful temper swayed, ordain the weather,
Venting their rage in storms; and when they cease
From rage, relenting with a cloudless ether.

But in order that reason may drive from us the very remembrance of such old-wives' tales as these, and the unmanning of senseless fear that they would still, if they could, beget in us, I will sing to you of the law and aspect of heaven, and of the birth of the storms and thunders, and of the bright lightnings, that you may see how all goes on by a fixed unbending law, that has no thought of man, nor any care about him; and that you may spare your pains, and never look to the skies for omens, nor heed a jot from what quarter the volant fire has fallen.

Thunder, in the first place, is the produce of clashing clouds, which either flap in the wind like canvas stretched and tossing over theatres, or, filled full of wind inside, burst suddenly as a distended bladder does.

It lightens, too, when the clouds have struck out by their collisions many seeds of fire; but we hear the thunder after we have seen the lightning, because, though the two are really simultaneous, the sound travels more slowly than the light does. There are also other ways in which the clouds

> Dye all the landscape with their wingèd light,
> And with a rapid quivering flashes out
> The sailing storm.

For sometimes the fire is caused, not by the clouds themselves, but by the wind working its way into them, and growing hot by its own velocity. This takes place, you must know, when the clouds are very dense, and are piled up into the heaven to an unimaginable height:—

> For do but note what time the storm-wind wild
> Comes carrying clouds like mountains through the air,
> Or on the mountain's selves the clouds are piled
> Motionless, and each wind is in its lair,
> Then may you mark those mountain-masses proud,
> And huge caves built of hanging rocks of cloud.

Well, it is through these cloud-mountains that the storm raves and prowls, and pent amongst the caves and precipices, howls like a pack of wild beasts, and, seeking a way out, rolls together seeds of fire, and at last comes bursting out in forky flashes.

And now I will tell you another thing;—I will tell you by what law

> The mighty thunderbolt
> Goes through the walls of houses like a shout;

piercing things that no earthly fire can pierce—nay, not even the fire of the sun in heaven.

Lucretius fulfils his promise at great length, and devotes nearly two hundred lines, of no great interest, to his account

of these thunderbolts; asking in the middle, not without pertinence, why, if they were hurled, as was said commonly, by the gods, to execute their vengeance, so many of them fell in the seas and deserts, and why the rest so rarely hit the only people for whom they possibly could have been intended.

From these subjects he passes on to the laws of earthquakes, the way in which the sea is still supplied with water, although so much is being constantly evaporated off its surface, the action of volcanoes, the rise and fall of the Nile, and a variety of other minor phenomena. He then at great length gives his explanation of the action of the magnet; and then suddenly leaps from this to a very short passage on the laws of the propagation of disease, which he traces to various conditions of climate, and the perpetual flying about in the air of particles that are hurtful to life, when attacking it under certain conditions. And it makes, he says, no difference whether we travel to places unfavourable to us, and change the atmosphere which wraps us round, or whether nature without our choice brings to us an atmosphere unsuited to us, or something to the use of which we have not been accustomed, and which is able to attack us on its first arrival.

He then, without more preface, at once plunges into a description of the great plague at Athens, borrowed from the celebrated account given by Thucydides. Such a form of disease, he says, and a death-fraught miasma, once within the borders of Cecrops defiled the whole land with dead, and unpeopled the streets, and drained the city of its citizens. Rising first and starting from the innermost borders of Egypt, having travelled through long reaches of air and over floating fields of sea, the plague pitched at last on the whole people of Athens:—

> The pestilence would first the head assail,
> And then the bloodshot eyes, wherein there stood
> A dull set fire; and next the throat grew pale
> Inside, and all its passage blotched with blood.
> Then ulcers formed, anon the voice would fail;
> The tongue, the spirit's spokesman, would exude
> Blood also, and relaxed in every string,
> Lolled in the mouth a parched and listless thing.

Next down the throat the insidious pest would glide,
And through the breast assault the heart's own door;
Then slowly would the vital power subside,
And through the mouth a stench begin to pour
With the decaying breath.

And so the description goes on for about a hundred and twenty lines, adding detail of this kind to detail, touching by the way on the agony and despair of the sufferers—how no remedy could be found anywhere—and at the appalling spectacle—

How medicine muttered low with voiceless fear.

And this above all, says Lucretius, heaped death on death; —whenever any refused to attend their own sick, killing neglect soon after would punish them for their too great love of life, by visiting them in their turn with as foul an end, abandoned in their turn, and forlorn of help.

They too who stayed to tend the beds of death,
Themselves anon were seen to droop and die,
Drawing contagion from the tainted breath
That thanked them for their kindness piteously.

And at length so great was the mortality, so many were the bodies in vain crying for burial, that the old rites of sepulture continued no more in the city, with which pious folk of old had been always wont to be buried: for everything was confusion and dismay, and each man would sorrowfully bury his own, in any way the present moment allowed.

And many a direful deed did men do then,
Urged on by sudden want and poverty;
For on the funeral pyres of other men
They thrust their own poor kin uproariously;
And wranglings rose, and oft their blood they'd shed,
Dogged, and dying ere they'd leave their dead.

And with these lines the poem of Lucretius ends.

THE POEMS AND FRAGMENTS

OF

CATULLUS

TRANSLATED IN THE METRES OF THE ORIGINAL BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTORY

LIFE OF CATULLUS

BY THE

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INTRODUCTION

THE LIFE OF CATULLUS

BY THE REV. JAMES DAVIES, M.A.

VALERIUS CATULLUS—about whose prænomen there is no evidence to show whether it was Caius or Quintus, and need be still less concern, as wherever the poet speaks of himself in his poems it is by his surname Catullus—was born B.C. 87, and died, it is probable, in B.C. 54 or 53. His life and flower were brief; but there is internal evidence to prove that he was alive after B.C. 57, his death-date in the Eusebian Chronicle; and the silence of his muse as to public events immediately subsequent to 54 B.C., the death of Clodius in 52 B.C., and the civil wars in 49-47 B.C. amongst the number, forbids the probability that he attained a longer span than some thirty-four years.

Beyond the birth-date, we have literally no souvenirs of the childhood or early youth of Catullus, for he has recorded scarcely any admonitus locorum, like Horace, and does not deal in playfully-described miracles to herald the advent of a "divine poet." Born at Verona, an important town of Transpadane Gaul on the river Athesis, which became a Latin colony in 89 B.C., and one of the finest cities in that part of Italy, he was by family and antecedents essentially Roman, and in education and tastes must be regarded as emphatically a town-bird. There is nothing to lead to the impression that he had the keen eye of Virgil for the natural and sylvan beauties of his birthplace and its environs, no special mention of its wine, apples, or spelt. He does not indeed utterly ignore the locality, for one of his most graceful pieces is a rapture about Sirmio (xxxi.), where he possessed a villa, no great distance from Verona, on the shores of the Lago di Garda. Hither in his manhood he returned for solace after trouble

and disappointment; but it was probably rather with a craving for rest than from the love of nature, which is not a keynote of his life or poetry.

His removal to Rome at an early age for his education must have begun the weaning process; and though Verona had its "capital in little," its importance, still witnessed by the remains of an amphitheatre more perfect though smaller than the Colosseum, its medley of inhabitants from the east and west, with a fair share of culture and urbanity, in spite of the infusion of barbarism which Cicero complained had reached even Rome with the "breeks" of the peoples from beyond the Alps, it is easy to conceive that Catullus soon contracted a preference for the capital, and was fain to quiz the provincials of his original home, though he seems to have retained not a few acquaintances and family ties amongst them. Such ties, as is seen in the cases of Catullus and Horace, were stronger in the provinces than in Rome; and we shall see anon that the former was influenced by the tenderest and most touching fraternal affection; but the charms of a residence at Rome, from the schoolboy period up to his brief life's end, asserted a power which was rarely interrupted by rustication or foreign travel; and he cannot herein be accused of the volatility or changeableness which characterised others of his craft and country. This would be a power certain to grow with years, and the more so as books, society, culture, were accumulated in the capital. "At Rome," wrote the poet to Manlius—

> Alone I live, alone my studies ply,
> And there my treasures are, my haunts, my home.

It is little more than guess-work to speculate on the rank and calling of Catullus's father. From the life of Julius Cæsar by Suetonius we gather that he was on terms of intimacy with, and a frequent host of, that great man; and it is not improbable that he and the son who died in Asia Minor may have been merchants, though the death in question would consist as well with the surmise that Catullus's brother was on some prætor's staff. Attempts have been made to estab-

lish against the poet himself a charge of impecuniousness and wastefulness; but "the cobwebs in his purse" in the invitation to Fabullus (xiii.) are a figure of speech which need not be literally interpreted; his allusions in xi., "Concerning Varus's Mistress," to a scanty exchequer and shabby equipment whilst in the suite of Memmius in Bithynia, cut rather at that ill-conditioned and illiberal prætor than himself; and as to the jeu d'esprit about the "Mortgage," it makes all the difference of meum and tuum whether we read of "your" or "my" country-seat as the snug tenement, as to which the poet tells Furius—

> That there's a mortgage, I've been told,
> About it wound so neatly,
> That, ere this new moon shall be old,
> 'Twill sweep it off completely.—(xxvi.)

Some possible colour for the suspicion is indeed found in the fact that on occasion—like other young men about town—Catullus sought to improve his finances, and so—like other young men—joined the suite of the prætor, Caius Memmius, in Bithynia, attracted by the literary presage of that governor, who was the friend and patron of Lucretius. From him, however, he derived nothing but disappointment. Memmius did not enrich his own coffers: his suite, if we may judge by Catullus, did not recoup their outfit; but, on the contrary, might have stood as a warning to other would-be fortune-menders for the nonce, as the poet points the simile—

> Like me, who following about
> My prætor—was—in fact, cleaned out.—(xxvii.)

But with regard to the poet's general finances we have certainly no reason, from his remains, to suppose that he was habitually out at elbows. On the contrary, we know that he had two country-houses,—one at the Lago di Garda (which some have thought is still represented by the ruins of a considerable edifice at the extremity of the promontory on its southern shore, though later discoveries show that these are

remains of baths of the date of Constantine, to say nothing of their extent being out of keeping with a poet's villa); and the other in the suburb of Tibur, where was his Tiburtine, or, as his well-wishers called it, to tease him, his Sabine Farm (xliv.). Add to these a house and library at Rome, of which he wrote, as we have seen above, to Manlius, and an estate which he owed to the bounty of a friend, and of which little more is known than that it included amongst other goods and chattels a housekeeper;[1] and we shall determine that Catullus was probably in nowise amenable to the charge of being a spendthrift or "distrest poet," but rather a man of good average means, in fair circumstances and good society. For the latter it is plain that his education would have fitted him. Though he had not, like Horace, the advantage of a Greek sojourn to give it finish and polish, he had enjoyed what was then at a premium in Latin towns even more than at Rome, a thorough introduction to Greek literature. Herein he laid the foundations of that deep familiarity with the Alexandrian poets, which, in common with his brother elegiast, Propertius, but perhaps with special manipulation all his own, characterizes his other than erotic poetry. It is possible that the imitations of Alexandrine poetry may have been his earliest poetic efforts, but the more natural supposition is that his earliest verses were inspired rather by the taverns and lounges of Roman or Veronese resort than by the schools; and if so, an early date would be assigned to "Colonia, its Old Bridge, and the Stupid Husband" (xvii.), the poem about a "Babbling Door," the "Mortgage," and other like squibs and jeux d'esprit.

The lack of what, to the accomplished Roman of the highest rank, was tantamount to a college education at Athens, Catullus made up later on by what is also a modern equivalent—foreign travel. After his bootless winter in Bithynia, he chartered a yacht and started on a tour amidst the isles of the Archipelago, after having first done the cities of Asia. And so up the Ionian and Adriatic he sailed home to the Lago

[1] To my domains he set an ampler bound,
And unto me a home and mistress gave.

di Garda and Sirmio, furnished, doubtless, with poetic material and fancy suggested by his voyage, and fitted more than ever for the intercourse of those literary men at Rome whose friendship he enjoyed in his mature life,—if we may use such an expression of one who died at thirty-four. Among these were Pollio, Calvus, Cicero, Cornelius Nepos, with whom to have been on terms of intimacy is a distinct set-off against an acquaintance with some scores of lighter and looser associates.

It is only imperfect acquaintance with the poems of Catullus that sets up his image as that of a mere Anacreontic poet, a light jester and voluptuary, who could not be earnest but when his jealousy was roused by his beauteous bane—his Lesbia. The finished grace of his poetic compliments to such historic Romans as those we have just named may be set beside the touching and pathetic poem to his brother as proofs of his exquisite command of very different veins, although in his hours of youthful gaiety he could throw off light lays on passing tittle-tattle, or chronicle adventures more or less scandalous and licentious.

His claim to permanent honour as a poet rests upon the depths of intense feeling which, whether in light love (if his love for Lesbia can ever be so called) or in brotherly affection, as shown in his lament for his brother's death in the Troad, well up to the sound of the plaintive lyre. It is pretty fully settled that his brother's death did not synchronise with the poet's voyage to Bithynia. Had it been so, would he not surely, as Mr. Theodore Martin has observed, have linked a fond memory of their joint boyhood with his ode on return to Sirmio? The times and seasons were distinct, but Catullus made a set pilgrimage to his brother's grave on the Rhætean headland; and to this landmark, as it were, of his life, this heartbreaking journey, and the desolation of the home to which he returned, must be referred his sad lines to Hortalus, Manlius, and Cornificius.

If to this we add the late realisation of Lesbia's utter wantonry (a chapter in the poet's history which, as influencing it beyond all others, deserves to be treated separately and at length), it is made clear that his youthful spirits may by

this time have been deserting the sensitive and saddened Catallus; and though there is no distinct record of his death, the inference is justifiable that accumulated bereavements and the rupture of tenderest ties, rather than the effects of habitual profligacy, brought to a premature death the richly-gifted and learned Veronese songster, whom Ovid in his "Amores" bids meet another early-taken bard—Tibullus—his youthful temples ivy-crowned, in the Elysian valley. It is surely with his riper years (perhaps about 61 or 60 B.C.), and not with those when he was more fickle and in the heyday of young blood, that we should connect his passion for Lesbia. Tired, perhaps, of light loves, which left only their bitterness behind, he had dreamed—though it was an empty and ill-founded dream—of a more enduring connection with this most beautiful and graceless of Roman matrons. This idol shattered, its worshipper undeceived, and the brother whom he loved with a pure affection torn from him by an untimely death, Catullus has little more in the way of a landmark for the biographer.

Between these events and his death-date, whether we take that as 57 or 54 B.C., there was time for tender regrets, occasional alternations between palinodes and professions of forgiveness, presentiments of coming fate, and more direct facing of premature death. Time also, as to our good fortune he discovered, for collecting the volume of his poems, which he fitly dedicated to Cornelius Nepos, and forwarded to him in a highly-finished dainty copy, "purfled," as one translator expresses it, "glossily, fresh with ashy pumice." It is a happy sample of his ideal of poetic compliment, and apologetically excuses the boldness of offering so slender an equivalent for the historian's three volumes (which have not survived) of Italian history. The first verse illustrates the binding and preparing of a Roman presentation copy. The last points the contrast of a sort of Diomede and Glaucus exchange with a lurking esteem for his own professedly inadequate gift:—

> Great Jove, what lore, what labour there!
> Then take this little book, whate'er
> Of good or bad it store;

And grant, oh guardian Muse, that it
May keep the flavour of its wit
A century or more!—M.

A few words should be said in deprecation of the character for licentiousness of life and poetry under which it has been the misfortune of Catallus to suffer amongst moderns. It ought to be taken into account that the standard of morals in his day was extremely low; vice and profligacy walking abroad barefaced, and some fresh scandal in high places—amidst the consul's suite and the victorious general's retinue—being bruited abroad as day succeeded day. A poet who moved in the world and had gained the repute of a smart hitter at the foibles and escapades of his neighbours, whilst himself hot-blooded, impetuous, fearless, and impatient of the restraint of society, was not unlikely to become the object of some such general charges as we find from xvi., that Aurelius and Furius circulated against Catullus. And to our apprehension the defence of the poet—

True poets should be chaste, I know,
But wherefore should their lines be so?

seems like begging the question, and scarcely a high tone of self-justification. Indeed, his retort is not simply turning the tables, as he might have done, on his maligners, but somewhat unnecessarily defending his life at the expense of his writings. This, it is probable, has acted in his disfavour. Excepting a few extremely personal and scurrilous epigrams and skits, it is not easy to pick out in the poetry of Catullus a greater looseness of language than in that of his Augustan successors: whilst as compared with his contemporaries in high places and public life, his moral conduct might have passed for fairly decent. What most concerns the modern reader is that after abatements and omissions of what is more or less unpresentable, there remains so much of a more refined standard of poetry and manners, so much tenderness in pure affection and friendship, so much, we might almost say, chivalry and forgivingness in the treatment of more question-

able objects of his passion, that we are won to condonation of the evil which is that of the time and society for the charm and ideal refinement of the genius which is specially his own. The standard of purity and morals has, we know, risen and fallen in modern times and nations; and a severe "index expurgatorius" should ban our Herricks, Moores, and Byrons—nay, even Burns; but unless a sponge is to wipe out for the sake of a few blots a body of true poetry, rare in form and singularly rich in talent and grace, and a hard and fast rule is to condemn bitter and sweet alike, it is to be hoped that a fairer insight into the poetry of Catullus, attainable through the blameless medium of at least one excellent translation, will enable English readers to judge how much of the prejudice attaching to the name of Catullus is without foundation, and how rich and original is the freshness and vivacity of his muse. It is no little gain to feel that in this genius we have "not only one of the very few writers who on one or two occasions speaks directly from the heart," but one entitled to the much more comprehensive praise, as has been shown by Professor Sellar in his Roman Poets of the Republic, of "a wonderful sincerity in all the poems, by means of which the whole nature of the poet, in its better and worse features, is revealed to us as if he were our contemporary."

THE POEMS OF CATULLUS

I

Who shall take thee, the new, the dainty volume,
Purfled glossily, fresh with ashy pumice?

You, Cornelius; you of old did hold them
Something worthy, the petty witty nothings,

While you venture, alone of all Italians,
Time's vast chronicle in three books to circle,
Jove! how arduous, how divinely learned!

Therefore welcome it, yours the little outcast,
This slight volume. O yet, supreme awarder,
Virgin, save it in ages on for ever.

II

Sparrow, favourite of my own beloved,
Whom to play with, or in her arms to fondle,
She delighteth, anon with hardy-pointed
Finger angrily doth provoke to bite her:

When my lady, a lovely star to long for,
Bends her splendour awhile to tricksy frolic;
Peradventure a careful heart beguiling,
Pardie, heavier ache perhaps to lighten;

Might I, like her, in happy play caressing
Thee, my dolorous heart awhile deliver!
. . . . . .
I would joy, as of old the maid rejoiced
Racing fleetly, the golden apple eyeing,
Late-won loosener of the wary girdle.

III

Weep each heavenly Venus, all the Cupids,
Weep all men that have any grace about ye.
Dead the sparrow, in whom my love delighted,
The dear sparrow, in whom my love delighted.

Yea, most precious, above her eyes, she held him,
Sweet, all honey: a bird that ever hail'd her
Lady mistress, as hails the maid a mother.

Nor would move from her arms away: but only
Hopping round her, about her, hence or hither,
Piped his colloquy, piped to none beside her.

Now he wendeth along the mirky pathway,
Whence, they tell us, is hopeless all returning.

Evil on ye, the shades of evil Orcus,
Shades all beauteous happy things devouring,
Such a beauteous happy bird ye took him.

Ah! for pity; but ah! for him the sparrow,
Our poor sparrow, on whom to think my lady's
Eyes do angrily redden all a-weeping.

IV

I

The puny pinnace yonder you, my friends, discern,
Of every ship professes agilest to be.
Nor yet a timber o'er the waves alertly flew
She might not aim to pass it; oary-wing'd alike
To fleet beyond them, or to scud beneath a sail.

Nor here presumes denial any stormy coast
Of Adriatic or the Cyclad orbed isles,
A Rhodos immemorial, or that icy Thrace,
Propontis, or the gusty Pontic ocean-arm,

Whereon, a pinnace after, in the days of yore
A leafy shaw she budded; oft Cytorus' height
With her did inly whisper airy colloquy.

2

Amastris, you by Pontus, you, the box-clad hill
Of high Cytorus, all, the pinnace owns, to both
Was ever, is familiar; in the primal years
She stood upon your hoary top, a baby tree,
Within your haven early dipt a virgin oar:

To carry thence a master o'er the surly seas,
A world of angry water, hail'd to left, to right
The breeze of invitation, or precisely set
The sheets together op'd to catch a kindly Jove.

Nor yet of any power whom the coasts adore
Was heard a vow to soothe them, all the weary way
From outer ocean unto glassy quiet here.
But all the past is over; indolently now
She rusts, a life in autumn, and her age devotes
To Castor and with him ador'd, the twin divine.

V

Living, Lesbia, we should e'en be loving.
Sour severity, tongue of eld maligning,
All be to us a penny's estimation.

Suns set only to rise again to-morrow.
We, when sets in a little hour the brief light,
Sleep one infinite age, a night for ever.

Thousand kisses, anon to these an hundred,
Thousand kisses again, another hundred,
Thousand give me again, another hundred.

Then once heedfully counted all the thousands,
We'll uncount them as idly; so we shall not

Know, nor traitorous eye shall envy, knowing
All those myriad happy many kisses.

VI

But that, Flavius, hardly nice or honest
This thy folly, methinks Catullus also
E'en had known it, a whisper had betray'd thee.

Some she-malady, some unhealthy wanton,
Fires thee verily: thence the shy denial.

Least, you keep not a lonely night of anguish;
Quite too clamorous is that idly-feigning
Couch, with wreaths, with a Syrian odour oozing;
Then that pillow alike at either utmost
Verge deep-dinted asunder, all the trembling
Play, the strenuous unsophistication;
All, O prodigal, all alike betray thee.

Why? sides shrunken, a sullen hip disabled,
Speak thee giddy, declare a misdemeanour.

So, whatever is yours to tell or ill or
Good, confess it. A witty verse awaits thee
And thy lady, to place ye both in heaven.

VII

Ask me, Lesbia, what the sum delightful
Of thy kisses, enough to charm, to tire me?

Multitudinous as the grains on even
Lybian sands aromatic of Cyrene;

'Twixt Jove's oracle in the sandy desert
And where royally Battus old reposeth;

Yea a company vast as in the silence
Stars which stealthily gaze on happy lovers;

E'en so many the kisses I to kiss thee
Count, wild lover, enough to charm, to tire me;

These no curious eye can wholly number,
Tongue of jealousy ne'er bewitch nor harm them.

VIII

Ah poor Catullus, learn to play the fool no more.
Lost is the lost, thou know'st it, and the past is past.

Bright once the days and sunny shone the light on thee,
Still ever hasting where she led, the maid so fair,
By me belov'd as maiden is belov'd no more.

Was then enacting all the merry mirth within
Thyself delighted, and the maid she said not nay.
Ah truly bright and sunny shone the days on thee.

Now she resigns thee; child, do thou resign no less,
Nor follow her that flies thee, or to bide in woe
Consent, but harden all thy heart, resolve, endure.

Farewell, my love. Catullus is resolv'd, endures,
He will not ask for pity, will not importune.

But thou'lt be mourning thus to pine unask'd alway.
O past retrieval faithless! Ah what hours are thine!
When comes a likely wooer? who protests thou'rt fair?

Who brooks to love thee? who decrees to live thine own?
Whose kiss delights thee? whose the lips that own thy bite?

Yet, yet, Catullus, learn to bear, resolve, endure.

IX

Dear Veranius, you of all my comrades
Worth, you only, a many goodly thousands,
Speak they truly that you your hearth revisit,
Brothers duteous, homely mother aged?

Yes, believe them. O happy news, Catullus!

I shall see him alive, alive shall hear him,
Tribes Iberian, uses, haunts, declaring
As his wont is; on him my neck reclining
Kiss his flowery face, his eyes delightful.

Now, all men that have any mirth about you,
Know ye happier any, any blither?

X

In the Forum as I was idly roaming
Varus took me a merry dame to visit.
She a lady, methought upon the moment,
Of some quality, not without refinement.

1

So, arrived, in a trice we fell on endless
Themes colloquial; how the fact, the falsehood
With Bithynia, what the case about it,
Had it helped me to profit or to money.

Then I told her a very truth; no atom
There for company, prætor, hungry natives,
Home might render a body aught the fatter:

Then our prætor a castaway, could hugely
Mulct his company, had a taste to jeer them.

2

Spoke another, 'Yet anyways, to bear you
Men were ready, enough to grace a litter.
They grow quantities, if report belies not.'
Then supremely myself to flaunt before her,

I 'So thoroughly could not angry fortune
Spite, I might not, afflicted in my province,
Get erected a lusty eight to bear me.

But so scrubby the poor sedan, the batter'd
Frame-work, nobody there nor here could ever
Lift it, painfully neck to nick adjusting.'

3

Quoth the lady, belike a lady wanton,
'Just for courtesy, lend me, dear Catullus,
Those same nobodies. I the great Sarapis
Go to visit awhile.' Said I in answer,

'Thanks; but, lady, for all my easy boasting,
'Twas too summary; there's a friend who knows me,
Cinna Gaius, his the sturdy bearers.

'Mine or Cinna's, an inch alone divides us,
I use Cinna's, as e'en my own possession.
But you're really a bore, a very tiresome
Dame unmannerly, thus to take me napping.'

XI

Furius and Aurelius, O my comrades,
Whether your Catullus attain to farthest
Ind, the long shore lash'd by reverberating
Surges Eoan;
Hyrcan or luxurious horde Arabian,
Sacan or grim Parthian arrow-bearer,
Fields the rich Nile discolorates, a seven-fold
River abounding;
Whether o'er high Alps he afoot ascending
Track the long records of a mighty Cæsar,
Rhene, the Gauls' deep river, a lonely Britain
Dismal in ocean;
This, or aught else haply the gods determine,
Absolute, you, with me in all to part not;
Bid my love greet, bear her a little errand,
Scarcely of honour.

Say 'Live on yet, still given o'er to nameless
Lords, within one bosom, a many wooers,
Clasp'd, as unlov'd each, so in hourly change all
Lewdly disabled.
'Think not henceforth, thou, to recal Catullus'
Love; thy own sin slew it, as on the meadow's
Verge declines, ungently beneath the plough-share
Stricken, a flower.'

XII

Marrucinian Asinius, hardly civil
Left-hand practices o'er the merry wine-cup.
Watch occasion, anon remove the napkin.
Call this drollery? Trust me, friend, it is not.
'Tis most beastly, a trick among a thousand.

Not believe me? believe a friendly brother,
Laughing Pollio; he declares a talent
Poor indemnification, he the parlous
Child of voluble humour and facetious.

So face hendecasyllables, a thousand,
Or most speedily send me back the napkin;
Gift not prized at a sorry valuation,
But for company; 'twas a friend's memento.

Cloth of Saetabis, exquisite, from utmost
Iber, sent as a gift to me Fabullus
And Veranius. Ought not I to love them
As Veranius even, as Fabullus?

XIII

Please kind heaven, in happy time, Fabullus,
We'll dine merrily, dear my friend, together.

Promise only to bring, your own, a dinner
Rich and goodly; withal a lily maiden,
Wine, and banter, a world of hearty laughing.

Promise only; betimes we dine, my gentle
Friend, most merrily; but, for your Catullus—
Know he boasts but a pouch of empty cobwebs.

Yet take the contrary fee, the quintessential
Love, or sweeter if aught is, aught supremer,

Perfume savoury, mine; my love received it
Gift of every Venus, all the Cupids.

Would you smell it? a god shall hear Fabullus
Pray unbody him only nose for ever.

XIV

Calvus, save that as eyes thou art beloved,
I could verily loathe thee for the morning's
Gift, Vatinius hardly more devoutly.

Slain with poetry! done to death with abjects!
O what syllable earn'd it, act allow'd it?
Gods, your malison on the sorry client
Sent that rascally rabble of malignants.

Yet, if, freely to guess, the gift recherché
Some grammarian, haply Sulla, sent thee;
I repine not; a dear delight a triumph
This, thy drudgery thus to see rewarded.

Gods! an horrible and a deadly volume!

Sent so faithfully, friend, to thy Catullus,
Just to kill him upon a day, the festive,
Saturnalia, best of all the season.
Sure, a drollery not without requital.

For, come dawn, to the cases and the bookshops
I; there gather a Cæsius and Aquinus,
With Suffenus, in every wretch a poison:
Such plague-prodigy thy remuneration!

Now good-morrow! away with evil omen
Whence ill destiny lamely bore ye, clumsy
Poet-rabble, an age's execration!

XIVB

Readers, any that in the future ever
Scan my fantasies, haply lay upon me
Hands adventurous of solicitation—

XV

Lend thy bounty to me, to my beloved,
Kind Aurelius. I do ask a favour

Fair and lawful; if you did e'er in earnest
Seek some virginal innocence to cherish,
Touch not lewdly the mistress of my passion.

Trust the people; avails not aught to fear them,
Such, who hourly within the streets repassing,
Run, good souls, on a busy quest or idle.

You, you only the free, the felon-hearted,
Fright me, prodigal you of every virtue.

Well, let luxury run her heady riot,
Love flow over; enough abroad to sate thee:
This one trespass—a tiny boon—presume not.

But should impious heat or humour headstrong
Drive thee wilfully wretch, to such profaning,
In one folly to dare a double outrage:

Ah what misery thine; what angry fortune!
Heels drawn tight to the stretch shall open inward
Lodgment easy to mullet and to radish.

XVI

I'll traduce you, accuse you, and abuse you,
Soft Aurelius, e'en as easy Furius.
You that lightly a saucy verse resenting,
Misconceit me, sophisticate me wanton.

Know, pure chastity rules the godly poet,
Rules not poesy, needs not e'er to rule it;
Charms some verse with a witty grace delightful?
'Tis voluptuous, impudent, a wanton.

It shall kindle an icy thought to courage,
Not boy-fancies alone, but every frozen
Flank immovable, all amort to pleasure.

You my kisses, a million happy kisses,
Musing, read me a silky thrall to softness?
I'll traduce you, accuse you, and abuse you.

XVII

I

Kind Colonia, fain upon bridge more lengthy to gambol,
And quite ready to dance amain, fearing only the rotten
Legs too crazily steadied on planks of old resurrections,
Lest it plunge to the deep morass, there supinely to welter;
So surprise thee a sumptuous bridge thy fancy to pleasure,
Passive under a Salian god's most lusty procession;
This rare favour, a laugh for all time, Colonia, grant me.

In my own township a citizen lives: Catullus adjures thee
Headlong into the mire below topsy-turvy to drown him.
Only, where the superfluent lake, the spongy putrescence,
Sinks most murkily flushed, descends most profoundly the bottom.

Such a ninny, a fool is he; witless even as any
Two years' urchin, across papa's elbow drowsily swaying.

2

For though wed to a maiden in spring-tide youthfully budding,
Maiden crisp as a petulant kid, as airily wanton,
Sweets more privy to guard than e'er grape-bunch shadowy-purpling;
He, he leaves her alone to romp idly, cares not a fouter.
Nor leans to her at all, the man's part; but helpless as alder
Lies, new-fell'd in a ditch, beneath axe Ligurian hamstrung,
As alive to the world, as if world nor wife were at issue.

Such this gaby, my own, my arch fool; he sees not, he hears not
Who himself is, or if the self is, or is not, he knows not.

Him I'd gladly be lowering down thy bridge to the bottom,
If from stupor inanimate peradventure he wake him,
Leaving muddy behind him his sluggish heart's hesitation,
As some mule in a glutinous sludge her rondel of iron.[1]

XXI

Sire and prince-patriarch of hungry starvelings,
Lean Aurelius, all that are, that have been,
That shall ever in after years be famish'd;

Wouldst thou lewdly my dainty love to folly
Tempt, and visibly? thou be near, be joking
Cling and fondle a hundred arts redouble?

[1] The round plate of iron which formed the lower part of the sock worn by horses, mules, &c., when on a journey, and, unlike our horse-shoes, was removable at the end of it.

O presume not: a wily wit defeated
Pays in scandalous incapacitation.

Yet didst folly to fulness add, 'twere all one;
Nor shall beauty to thirst be train'd or hunger's
Grim necessity; this is all my sorrow.

Then hold, wanton, upon the verge; to-morrow
Comes preposterous incapacitation.

XXII

Suffenus, he, dear Varus, whom, methinks, you know,
Has sense a ready tongue to talk, a wit urbane,
And writes a world of verses, on my life no less.

Ten times a thousand he, believe me, ten or more,
Keeps fairly written; not on any palimpsest,
As often, enter'd, paper extra-fine, sheets new,
New every roller, red the strings, the parchment-case
Lead-rul'd, with even pumice all alike complete.

You read them: our choice spirit, our refin'd rare wit,
Suffenus, O no ditcher e'er appeared more rude,
No looby coarser; such a shock, a change is there.

How then resolve this puzzle? He the birthday-wit,
For so we thought him—keener yet, if aught is so—
Becomes a dunce more boorish e'en than hedgeborn boor,
If e'er he faults on verses; yet in heart is then
Most happy, writing verses, happy past compare,
So sweet his own self, such a world at home finds he.

Friend, 'tis the common error; all alike are wrong,
Not one, but in some trifle you shall eye him true
Suffenus; each man bears from heaven the fault they send,
None sees within the wallet hung behind, our own.

XXIII

Needy Furius, house nor hoard possessing,
Bug or spider, or any fire to thaw you,
Yet most blest in a father and a step-dame,
Each for penury fit to tooth a flint-stone:
Is not happiness yours? a home united?
Son, sire, mother, a lathy dame to match him.

Who can wonder? in all is health, digestion,
Pure and vigorous, hours without a trouble.
Fires ye fear not, or house's heavy downfal,
Deeds unnatural, art in act to poison,
Dangers myriad accidents befalling.

Then your bodies? in every limb a shrivell'd
Horn, all dryness in all the world whatever,
Tann'd or frozen or icy-lean with ages.
Sure superlative happiness surrounds thee.
Thee sweat frets not, an o'er-saliva frets not,
Frets not snivel or oozy rheumy nostril.

Yet such purity lacks not e'en a purer.
White those haunches as any cleanly-silver'd
Salt, it takes you a month to barely dirt them.
Then like beans, or inert as e'er a pebble,
Those impeccable heavy loins, a finger's
Breadth from apathy ne'er seduced to riot.

Such prosperity, such superb profusion,
Slight not, Furius, idly nor reject not.
As for sesterces, all the would-be fortune,
Cease to wish it; enough, methinks, the present.

XXIV

O thou blossom of all the race Juventian
Not now only, but all as yet arisen,
All to flower in after-years arising;

Midas' treasury better you presented
Him that owns not a slave nor any coffer,
Ere you suffer his alien arm's presuming.

What? you fancy him all refin'd perfection?
Perfect! truly, without a slave, a coffer.

Slight, reject it, away with it; for all that
He, he owns not a slave nor any coffer.

XXV

Smooth Thallus, inly softer you than any furry rabbit,
Or glossy goose's oily plumes, or velvet earlap yielding,
Or feel age's heavy thighs, or flimsy filthy cobweb;
And Thallus, hungry rascal you, as hurricane rapacious,
When winks occasion on the stroke, the gulls agape declaring:

Return the mantle home to me, you watch'd your hour to pilfer,
The fleecy napkin and the rings from Thynia quaintly graven,
Whatever you parade as yours, vain fool, a sham reversion:

Unglue the nails adroit to steal, unclench the spoil, deliver,
Lest yet that haunch voluptuous, those tender hands caressant,
Should take an ugly print severe, the scourge's heavy branding;

And strange to bruises you should heave, as heaves in open Ocean,
Some little hoy surprised adrift, when wails the windy water.

XXVI

Draughts, dear Furius, if my villa faces,
'Tis not showery south, nor airy wester,
North's grim fury, nor east; 'tis only fifteen
Thousand sesterces, add two hundred over.
Draft unspeakable, icy, pestilential!

XXVII

Boy, young caterer of Falernian olden,
Brim me cups of a fiercer harsher essence;
So Postumia, queen of healths presiding,
Bids, less thirsty the thirsty grape, the toper.

But dull water, avaunt. Away the wine-cup's
Sullen enemy; seek the sour, the solemn!
Here Thyonius hails his own elixir.

XXVIII

Starving company, troop of hungry Piso,
Light of luggage, of outfit expeditious,
You, Veranius, you, my own Fabullus,

Say, what fortune? enough of empty masters,
Frost and famine, a lingering probation?

Stands your dairy fair? is any profit
Enter'd given? as I to serve a prætor
Count each beggarly gift a timely profit.

Trust me, Memmius, you did aptly finger
My passivity, fool'd me most supinely.

Friends, confess it; in e'en as hard a fortune
You stand mulcted, on you alike abashless
Rake rides heavily. Court the great who wills it!

Gods and goddesses evil heap upon ye,
Rogues to Romulus and to Remus outcast.

XXIX

Can any brook to see it, any tamely bear—
If any, gamester, epicure, a wanton, he—
Mamurra's own whatever all the curly Gauls
Did else inherit, or the lonely Briton isle?
Can you look on, look idly, filthy Romulus?

Shall he, in o'er-assumption, o'er-repletion he,
Sedately saunter every dainty couch along,
A bright Adonis, as the snowy dove serene?[1]
Can you look on, look idly, filthy Romulus?
Look idly, gamester, epicure, a wanton, you.

Unique commander, and was only this the plea
Detain'd you in that islet angle of the west,
To gorge the shrunk seducer irreclaimable
With haply twice a million, add a million yet?
What else was e'er unhealthy prodigality?

The waste? to lust a little? on the belly less?
Begin; a glutted hoard paternal; ebb the first.
To this, the booty Pontic; add the spoil from out
Iberia, known to Tagus' amber ory stream.
Not only Gaul, nor only quail the Briton isles.

What help a rogue to fondle? is not all his act
To swallow monies, empty purses heap on heap?
But you—to please him only, shame to Rome, to me!
Could you the son, the father, idly ruin all?

XXX

False Alfenus, in all amity frail, duty a prodigal,
Doth thy pity depart? Shall not a friend, traitor, a friend
recal

Love? what courage is here me to betray, me to repudiate?
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Never sure did a lie, never a sin, please the celestials.
This you heed not; alas! leave me to new misery, desolate.
O where now shall a man trust? liveth yet any fidelity?

---

[1] The connexion between Adonis and the dove formed part of the legends of Cyprus, and was alluded to by the lyric poet Timocreon.

You, you only did urge love to be free, life to surrender, you.
Guiding into the snare, falsely secure, prophet of happiness.

Now you leave me, retract, every deed, every word allow
Into nullity winds far to remove, vapoury clouds to bear.

You forget me, but yet surely the Gods, surely remembereth
Faith; hereafter again honour awakes, causeth a wretch to rue.

XXXI

O THOU of islands jewel and of half-islands,
Fair Sirmio, whatever o'er the lakes' clear rim
Or waste of ocean, Neptune holds, a two-fold pow'r;
What joy have I to see thee, and to gaze what glee!

Scarce yet believing Thunia past, the fair champaign
Bithunian, yet in safety thee to greet once more.
From cares to part us—where is any joy like this?

Then drops the soul her fardel, as the travel-tir'd
World-weary wand'rer touches home, returns, sinks down
In joy to slumber on the bed desir'd so long.
This meed, this only counts for e'en an age all toil.

O take a welcome, lovely Sirmio, thy lord's,
And greet him happy; greet him all the lake Lydian;
Laugh out whatever laughter at the hearth rings clear.

XXXII

LIST, I charge thee, my gentle Ipsithilla,
Lovely ravisher and my dainty mistress,
Say we'll linger a lazy noon together.

Suits my company? lend a farther hearing:
See no jealousy make the gate against me,
See no fantasy lead thee out a-roaming.
Keep close chamber; anon in all profusion
Count me kisses again again returning.

Bides thy will? with a sudden haste command me;
Full and wistful, at ease reclin'd, a lover
Here I languish alone, supinely dreaming.

XXXIII

MASTER-robber of all that haunt the bath-rooms,
Old Vibennius, and his heir the wanton;
(His the dirtier hands, the greedy father,
Yours the filthier heart, his heir as hungry;)

Please your knaveries hoist a sail for exile,
Pains and privacy? since by this the father's
Thefts are palpable, and a rusty favour,
Son, picks never a penny from the people.

XXXIV

GREAT Diana protecteth us,
Maids and boyhood in innocence.
Maidens virtuous, innocent
Boys, your song be Diana.
Hail, Latonia, thou that art
Throned daughter of enthronis'd
Jove; near Delian olive of
Mighty mother y-boren.
Queen of mountainous heights, of all
Forests leafy, delightable;
Glens in bowery depths remote,
Rivers wrathfully sounding.
Thee, Lucina, the travailing
Mother haileth, a sovereign
Juno; Trivia thou, the bright
Moon, a glory reflected.
Thou thine annual orb anew,
Goddess, monthly remeasuring,
Farmsteads lowly with affluent
Corn dost fill to the flowing.

Be thy heavenly name whate'er
Name shall please thee, in hallowing;
Still keep safely the glorious
Race of Romulus olden.

XXXV

1

Take Caecilius, him the tender-hearted
Bard, my paper, a wish from his Catullus.
Come from Larius, haste to leave the new-built
Comum's watery city, seek Verona.

Some particular intimate reflexions
One would tell thee, a friend we love together.

2

So he'll quickly devour the way, if only
He's no booby; for all a snowy maiden
Chide imperious, and her hands around him
Both in jealousy clasp'd, refuse departure.

She, if only report the truth bely not,
Doats, as hardly within her own possession.

3

For since lately she read his high-preluding
Queen of Dindymus, all her heart is ever
Melting inly with ardour and with anguish.

Maiden, laudable is that high emotion,
Muse more rapturous, you, than any Sappho.
The Great Mother he surely sings divinely.

XXXVI

1

Vilest paper of all dishonour, annals
Of Volusius, hear my lovely lady's

Vow, and pay it; awhile she swore to Venus
And fond Cupid, if ever I returning
Ceased from enmity, left to launch iambics,

She would surely devote the sorry poet's
Choicest rarities unto sooty Vulcan,
The lame deity, there to blaze lamenting.

With such drollery, such supreme defiance,
Swore strange oath to the gods the naughty wanton.

2

Now, O heavenly child of azure Ocean,
Queen of Idaly, queen of Urian highlands,

Who Ancona the fair, the reedy Cnidos
Hauntest, Amathus and the lawny Golgi,
Or Dyrrhachium, hostel Adriatic;

Hear thy votaress, answer her petition;
'Tis most graceful, a dainty thought to charm thee.

But ye verses, away to fire, to burning,
Rank rusticities, empty vapid annals
Of Volusius, heap of all dishonour.

XXXVII

1

O FROWSY tavern, frowsy fellowship therein,
Ninth post in order next beyond the twins cap-crown'd,

Shall manly service none but you alone employ,
Shall you alone whatever in the world smiles fair,
Possess it, every other hold to lack esteem?

Or if in idiot impotence arow you sit,
One hundred, yes two hundred, am not I, think you,
A man to bring mine action on your whole row there?

So think not, he that likes not; answer how you may,
With scorpion I, with emblem all your haunt will scrawl.

2

For she the bright one, lately fled beyond these arms,
The maid belov'd as maiden is belov'd no more,
Whom I to win, stood often in the breach, fought long,

Has sat amongst you. Her the grand, the great, all, all
Do dearly love her; yea, beshrew the damned wrong,
Each slight seducer, every lounger highway-born,

You chiefly, peerless paragon of the tribe long-lock'd,
Rude Celtiberia's child, the bushy rabbit-den,
Egnatius, so modish in the big bush-beard,
And teeth a native lotion hardly scours quite pure.

XXXVIII

Cornificius, ill is your Catullus,
Ill, ah heaven, a weary weight of anguish,
More more weary with every day, with each hour.

You deny me the least, the very lightest
Help, one whisper of happy thought to cheer me.

Nay, I'm sorrowful. You to slight my passion?
Ah! one word, but a tiny word to cheer me,
Sad as ever a tear Simonidean.

XXXIX

1

Egnatius, spruce owner of superb white teeth,
Smiles sweetly, smiles for ever: is the bench in view
Where stands a pleader just prepar'd to rouse our tears,

Egnatius smiles sweetly; near the pyre they mourn
Where weeps a mother o'er the lost, the kind one son,
Egnatius smiles sweetly; what the time or place

Or thing soe'er, smiles sweetly; such a rare compliant
Is his, not handsome, scarce to please the town, say I.

2

So take a warning for the nonce, my friend; town-bred
Were you, a Sabine hale, a pearly Tiburtine,
A frugal Umbrian body, Tuscan huge of paunch,

A grim Lanuvian black of hue, prodigious-tooth'd,
A Transpadane, my country not to pass untax'd,
In short whoever cleanly cares to rinse foul teeth,

Yet sweetly smiling ever I would have you not,
For silly laughter, it's a silly thing indeed.

3

Well: you're a Celtiberian; in the parts thereby
What pass'd the night in water, every man, came dawn,
Scours clean the foul teeth with it and the gums rose-red;

So those Iberian snowy teeth, the more they shine,
So much the deeper they proclaim the draught impure.

XL

What fatality, what chimera drives thee
Headlong, Ravidus, on to my iambics?

What fell deity, most malign to listen,
Fires thy fury to quarrel unavailing?

Wouldst thou busy the breath of half the people?
Break with clamour at any cost the silence?

Thou wilt do it; a wretch that hop'd my darling
Love to fondle, a sure retaliation.

XLI

Ameana, the maiden of the people,
Ask me sesterces, all the many thousands.

Maiden she with a nose not wholly faultless,
Bankrupt Formian, your declar'd devotion.

Wherefore look to the maiden, her relations:
Call her family, summon all the doctors.

Your poor maiden is oddly touch'd; a mirror
Sure would lend her a soberer reflexion.

XLII

1

Come all hendecasyllables whatever,
Wheresoever ye house you, all whatever.

I the game of an impudent adultress?
She refuse to return to me the tablets
Where you syllable? O ye can't be silent.
Up, have after her, ask renunciation.

Would ye know her? a woman, you shall eye her
Strutting loftily, whiles she laughs a loud laugh
Vast and vulgar, a Gaulish hound beseeming.
Form your circle about her, ask her, urge her.

'Hark, adultress, hand the note-book over.
Hark, the note-book, adultress, hand it over.'

2

What? you scorn us? O ugly filth, detested
Trull, whatever is all abomination.

Nay then, louder. Enough as yet it is not.
If this only remains, perhaps the dog-like
Face may colour, a brassy blush may yield us.
Swell your voices in higher harsher yellings,

'Hark, adultress, hand the note-bood over;
Hark, the note-book; adultress, hand it over.'

Look, she moves not at all: we waste the moments.
Change your quality, try another issue.
Such composure a sweeter air may alter.
'Pure and virtuous, hand the note-book over.'

XLIII

Hail, fair virgin, a nose among the larger,
Feet not dainty, nor eyes to match a raven,
Mouth scarce tenible,[1] hands not wholly faultless,
Tongue most surely not absolute refinement,
Bankrupt Formian, your declar'd devotion.
Thou the beauty, the talk of all the province?
Thou my Lesbia tamely think to rival?
O preposterous, empty generation!

XLIV

O thou my Sabine farmstead or my Tiburtine,
For who Catullus would not harm, avow, kind souls,
Thou surely art at Tibur; and who quarrel will
Sabine declare thee, stake the world to prove their say:

But be'st a Sabine, be'st a very Tiburtine,
At thy suburban villa what delight I knew
To spit the tiresome cough away, my lung's' ill guest,
My belly brought me, not without a sad weak sin,
Because a costly dinner I desir'd too much.

---

[1] *i. e.,* easily running over.

For I, to feast with Sestius, that host unmatch'd,
A speech of his, pure poison, every line deep-drugg'd,
His speech against the plaintiff Antius, read through.

Whereat a cold chill, soon a gusty cough in fits,
Shook, shook me ever, till to thy retreat I fled,
There duly dosed with nettle and repose found cure.
So, now recruited, thanks superlative, dear farm,
I give thee, who so lightly didst avenge that sin.

And trust me, farm, if ever I again take up
With Sextius' black charges, I'll rebel no more;
But let the chill things damn to cold, to cough, not me
That read the volume—no, but him, the man's vain self.

XLV

1

While Septimius in his arms his Acme
Fondled closely, 'My own,' said he, 'my Acme,

If I love not as unto death, nor hold me
Ever faithfully well-prepar'd to largest
Strain of fiery wooer yet to love thee,

Then in Libya, then may I alone in
Burning India face a sulky lion.'

Scarce he ended, upon the right did eager
Love sneeze amity; 'twas before to leftward.

2

Acme quietly back her head reclining
Towards her boy, with a rosy mouth delightful.
Kissed his passionate eyes elately swimming,

Then 'Septimius, O my life' she murmur'd,
'So may he that is in this hour ascendant

Rule us ever, as in me burns a greater
Fire, a fiercer, in every vein triumphing.'

Scarce she ended, upon the right did eager
Love sneeze amity; 'twas before to leftward.

3

So, that augury joyous each possessing,
Loves, is lov'd with an even emulation.

Poor Septimius, all to please his Acme,
Recks not Syria, recks not any Britain.

In Septimius only faithful Acme
Makes her softnesses, holds her happy pleasures.

When did mortal on any so rejoicing
Look, on union hallow'd as divinely?

XLVI

Now soft spring with her early warmth returneth,
Now doth Zephyrus, health benignly breathing,
Still the boisterous equinoctial heaven.

Leave we Phrygia, leave the plains, Catullus,
Leave Nicaea, the sultry soil of harvest:
On for Asia, for the starry cities.
Now all flurry the soul is out a-ranging,
Now with vigour aflame the feet renew them.

Farewell company true, my lovely comrades.
You so joyfully borne from home together,
Now o'er many a weary way returning.

XLVII

Porcius, Socration, the greedy Piso's
Tools of thievery, rogues to famish ages,

So that filthy Priapus ousts to please you
My Veranius even and Fabullus?

What? shall you then at early noon carousing
Lap in luxury? they, my jolly comrades,
Search the streets on a quest of invitation?

XLVIII

If, Juventius, I the grace win ever
Still on beauteous honied eyes to kiss thee,
I would kiss them a million, yet a million.

Yea, nor count me to win the full attainment,
Not, tho' heavier e'en than ears at harvest,
Fall my kisses, a wealthy crop delightful.

XLIX

Greatest speaker of any born a Roman,
Marcus Tullius, all that are, that have been,
That shall ever in after-years be famous;

Thanks superlative unto thee Catullus
Renders, easily last among the poets.

He is easily last among the poets
As thou surely the first among the pleaders.

L

I

Dear Lucinius, yestereve we linger'd
Scrawling fancies, a hundred, in my tablets,
Wits in combat; a treaty this between us.

Scribbling drolleries each of us together
Launched one arrowy metre and another,
Tenders jocular o'er the merry wine-cup.

2

So quite sorely with all your humour heated
Gay Lucinius, I that eve departed.

Food my misery could not any lighten,
Sleep nor quiet upon my eyes descended.

Still untamable o'er the couch did I then
Turn and tumble, in haste to see the day-light,
Hear your prattle again, again be with you.

3

Then, when weary with all the worry, numb'd, dead,
Sank my body, upon the bed reposing,
This, O humorous heart, did I, a poem
Write, my tedious anguish all revealing.

O beware then of hardihood; a lover's
Plea for charity, dear my friend, reject not:
What if Nemesis haply claim repayment?
She is tyrannous. O beware offending.

LI

He to me like unto the Gods appeareth,
He, if I dare speak it, ascends above them,
Face to face who toward thee attently sitting
Gazes or hears thee
Lovely in sweet laughter; alas within me
Every lost sense falleth away for anguish;
When as I look'd on thee, upon my lips no
Whisper abideth,
Straight my tongue froze, Lesbia; soon a subtle
Fire thro' each limb streameth adown; with inward
Sound the full ears tinkle, on either eye night's
Canopy darkens.

Ease alone, Catullus, alone afflicts thee;
Ease alone breeds error of heady riot;
Ease hath entomb'd princes of old renown and
Cities of honour.

LII

Enough, Catullus! how can you delay to die?
If in the curule chair a hump sits, Nonius;
A would-be consul lies in hope, Vatinius:
Enough, Catullus! how can you delay to die?

LIII

How I laughed at a wag amid the circle!
He, when Calvus in high denunciation
Of Vatinius had declaim'd divinely,
Hands uplifted as in supreme amazement,
Cried 'God bless us! a wordy cockalorum!'

LIV

Otho's head is a very dwarf; a rustic's
Shanks has Herius, only semi-cleanly;
Libo's airs to a fume of art refine them.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Yet thou flee'st not above my keen iambics.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
[*So may destiny doom me quite to silence*]
As I care not if every line offend thee
And Sufficius, age in youth's revival.
. . . . . .
Thou shalt kindle at innocent iambics,
Mighty general, once again returning.

LV

1

List, I beg, provided you're in humour,
Speak your privacy, show what alley veils you.
You I sought on Campus, I, the lesser,
You on Circus, in all the bills but you, sir.
You with father Jove in holy temple.
Then, where flocks the parade to Magnus' arches,

Friend, I hail'd each lady promenader,
Each, I found, did face me quite sedately.

2

What? they steal, I loudly cried, protesting,
My Camerius? out upon the wenches!
Answer'd one and lightly bared a bosom,
'See! what bowery roses; here he hides him.'

Yea 'twould task e'en Hercules to bear you,
You so scornful, friend, in your refusing.

3

Not tho' I were warder of the Cretans,
Not tho' Pegasus on his airy pinion,

Perseus feathery-footed, I a Ladas,
Rhesus' chariot yok'd to snowy coursers,
Add each feathery sandal, every flying
Power, ask fleetness of all the winds of heaven,
Mine, Camerius, and to me devoted;
Yet with drudgery sorely spent should I, yet

Worn, outworn with languor unto languor
Faint, O friend, in an empty quest to find you.

4

Say, where think you anon to be; declare it,
Fair and free, submit, commit to daylight.
What? still thrall to the lovely lily ladies?
Keep close mouth, lock fast the tongue within it,
Love's felicity falls without fruition;
Venus still is free to talk, a babbler.
Yet close palate, and if ye will it; only
In my love some part to bear refuse not.

LVII

O RARE sympathies! happy rakes united!
There Mamurra the woman, here a Caesar.

Who can wonder? An ugly brand on either,
His, true Formian, his, politely Roman,
Rests indelible, in the bone residing.

Either infamous, each a twin dishonour,
Bookish brethren, a dainty pair pedantic;

One adultrous, as hungry he; with equal
Parts in women, a lusty corporation.
O rare sympathies! happy rakes united!

LVIII

THAT bright Lesbia, Caelius, the self-same
Peerless Lesbia, she than whom Catullus
Self nor family more devoutly cherish'd,
By foul roads, or in every shameful alley,
Strains the vigorous issue of the people.

LIX

POOR Rufa from Bononia Rufulus gallants,
Menenius' errant lady, she that in grave-yards

(You've seen her often) snaps from every pile her meal,
When hotly chasing dusty loaves the fire rolls down,
She felt some half-shorn corpseman and his hand's big blow.

LX

Hadst thou a Libyan lioness on heights all stone,
A Scylla, barking wolvish at the loins' last verge,
To bear thee, O black-hearted, O to shame forsworn,
That unto supplication in my last sad need
Thou mightst not harken, deaf to ruth, a beast, no man?

LXI

God, on verdurous Helicon
  Dweller, child of Urania,
  Thou that draw'st to the man the fair
Maiden, O Hymenaeus, O
  Hymen, O Hymenaeus:

Wreathe thy brows in amaracus'
  Fragrant blossom; an aureat
  Veil be round thee; approach, in all
Joy, approach with a luminous
  Foot, a sandal of amber.

Come, for jolly the time, awake.
  Chant in melody musical
  Hymns of bridal; on earth a foot
Beating, hands to the winds above
  Torches oozily swinging.

Such, as she that on Idaly
  Venus dwelleth, appear'd before
  Him, the Phrygian arbiter,
So with Mallius happily
  Happy Junia weddeth.

Like some myrtle of Asia
Bright in airily blossoming
Boughs, the wood Hamadryades
Nurse with showery dew, to be
Theirs, a tender plaything.

So come to us in haste; away,
Leave thy Thespian hollow-arch'd
Rock, muse-haunted, Aonian,
Drench'd in spray from aloft, the cold
Drift of Nymph Aganippe.

Homeward summon a sovereign
Wife most passionate, holden in
Love fast prisoner; ivy not
Closer closes an elm around,
Interchangeably trailing.

You too with him, O you for whom
Comes as joyous a time, your own.
Virgins stainless of heart, arise.
Chant in unison, Hymen, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

That, more readily listening,
Whiles your song to familiar
Duty calls him, he hie apace,
Lord of fair paramours, of youth's
Fair affection uniter.

Who more worthy than he to list
Lovers wearily languishing?
Bends from heaven a sovereign
God adorabler? Hymen, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

You the father in years for his
Child beseecheth; a virginal
Zone falls slackly to earth for you,

You half-fear in his hankering
  Lists the groomsman approaching.

You from motherly lap the bright
  Girl can sever; your hands divine
  Gives dominion, ushering
Warm the lover. O Hymen, O
  Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Nought delightful, if you be far,
  Nought unharmed of envious
  Tongues, Love wins him: if you be near
Much he wins him. O excellent
  God, that hath not a rival.

Houses cannot, if you be far,
  Yield their children, a babe renew
  Sire or mother: if you be near,
Comes renewal. O excellent
  God, that hath not a rival.

If your great ceremonial
  Fail, no champion yeomanry
  Guards the border. If you be near
Arms the border. O excellent
  God, that hath not a rival.

Fling the portal apart. The bride
  Waits. O see ye the luminous
  Torch-flakes ruddily flickering?
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Nought she hears us: ner innocent
  Eyes do weep to be going.

Weep not, lady; for envious
Tongue no lovelier owneth, Au-
Runculeia; nor any more
Fair saw rosily bright the dawn
Leave his chamber in Ocean.

Such in many a flowering
Garden, trimm'd for a lord's delight,
Stands some delicate hyacinth.
Yet you tarry. The day declines.
Forth, fair bride, to the people.

Forth, fair bride, to the people, if
So it likes you, a-listening
Words that please us. O eye ye yon
Torches ruddily flickering?
Forth, fair bride, to the people.

Husband never of yours shall haunt
Stained wanton, a mutinous
Fancy shamefully following,
Tire not ever, or e'en from your
Dainty bosom unyoke him.

He more lithe than a vine amid
Trees, that, mazily folded, it
Clasps and closes, in amorous
Arms shall close thee. The day declines.
Forth, fair bride, to the people.

Couch of pleasure. *O odorous*
Couch, whose gorgeous apparellings,
Silver-purple, on Indian
Woods do rest them; adown the bright
Feet in ivory glisten;

When thy lord in his hour attains,
What large extasy, while the night
Fleets, or noon the meridian

Passes thoro'. The day declines.
Forth, fair bride, to the people.

Lift the torches aloft in air,
Boys: the fiery veil is here.
Come, to measure your hymn rehearse.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Nor withhold ye the countryman's
Ribald raillery Fescenine.
Nor if happily boys declare
Thy dominion attaint, refuse,
Youth, the nuts to be flinging.

Fling, O womanish youth; the boys
Ask thee charity. Time agone
Toys and folly: to-day begins
Our high duty, Talassius.
Hasten, youth, to be flinging.

Thou didst surely but yestereve
Mock the women, a favourite
Far above them: anon the first
Beard, the razor. Alack, alas!
Hasten, youth, to be flinging.

You, whom odorous oils declare
Bridegroom, swerve not; a slippery
Love calls lightly, but yet refrain.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Lawful only did e'er delight
You, we know; but it is not, O
Husband, lawful as heretofore.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Bride, thou also, if he demand
Aught, refuse not, assent, obey.
Love can angrily pipe adieu.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Look! thy mansion, a sovereign
Home most goodly, by him to thee
Given. Reign as a queen within,
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Still when hoary decrepitude,
Shaking wintery brows benign,
Nods a tremulous Yes to all.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

With fair augury smite the blest
Threshold, sunnily glistening
Feet: yon ivory door approach,
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

See one seated, a banqueter.
'Tis thy lord on a Tyrian
Couch: his spirit is all to thee.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Not less surely in him than in
Thee love lighteth a bosoming
Flame; but deeper, a fire within.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

[*A stanza is missing here.*]

Thou, whose purple her arm, the slim
Arm, props happily, boy, depart.
Time the bride be at entering.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

You in chastity tried the long
Years, good women of agedest
Husbands, lay ye the bride to-night.
Hymen, O Hymenaeus, O
Hymen, O Hymenaeus.

Husband, stay not: a bride within
Coucheth ready, the flowering
Spring less lovely; a countenance
White as parthenice, beyond
Yellow poppy to gaze on.

Thou, so help me the favouring
Gods immortal, as heavenly
Fair art also, adorned of
Venus' bounty. The day declines.
Come nor tarry to greet her.

Not too slothfully tarrying,
Thou art here. Benediction of
Venus help thee, a man without
Shame, a blameless, a love that is
Honest frankly revealing.

Dust of infinite Africa,
Stars that sparkle, a myriad
Host, who measureth, your delights
He shall tell them, ineffable,
Multitudinous, over.

Make your happy delight, renew'd
Soon in children. A glorious
Name and olden is ill without

Children, unto the first a new
Stock as goodly begetting.

Some Torquatus, a beauteous
Babe, on motherly breasts to thee
Stretching, father, his innocent
Hands, smile softly from inchoate
Lips half-open a welcome.

Like his father, a Mallius
New presented, of every
Eyeing stranger allowed his own;
Mother's chastity moulded in
Features childly revealing.

Glory speak of him issuing
Child of mother as excellent
She, as only that age-renown'd
Wife, whose story Telemachus
Blazons, Penelopea.

Virgins, close ye the door. Enough
This our carol. O happiest
Lovers, jollity live with you.
Still that genial youth to love's
Consummation attend ye.

LXII

YOUTHS

Hesper is here; rise youths, rise all of you; high on Olympus
Hesper his orb long-look'd for aloft 'gins slowly to kindle.
Time is now to arise, from tables costly to part us;
Now doth a virgin approach, now soundeth a glad Hymenaeal.

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

VIRGINS

See ye yon youthful band? O, maidens, rise ye to meet them.
Comes not Night's bright bearer a fire o'er Oeta revealing?
Surely; for even now, in a moment all have arisen,
Not for nought have arisen; a song waits, goodly to gaze on.

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

YOUTHS

No light victory this, O comrades, ready before us.
Busy the virgins muse, their practis'd ditty recalling,
Muse nor shall miscarry; a song for memory waits us.
Rightly; for all their souls do inwards labour in issue.

We—our thoughts one way, our ears have drifted another,
So comes worthy defeat; no victory calls to the careless.
Come then, in even race let thought their melody rival;
They must open anon; 'twere better anon be replying.

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

VIRGINS

Hesper, moveth in heaven a light more tyrannous ever?
Thou from a mother's arms canst wrest her daughter asunder,
Wrest from a mother's arms her daughter woefully clinging,
Then to the burning youth his virgin beauty deliver.
Foes in a new-sack'd town, when wrought they crueller ever?

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

YOUTHS

Hesper, shineth in heaven a light more genial ever?
Thou with a bridal flame true lovers' unity crownest,
All which duly the men, which plighted duly the parents,
Then completed alone, when thou in splendour awakest.
When shone an happier hour than thy god-speeded arriving?

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

VIRGINS

Sisters, Hesper a fellow of our bright company taketh.

[*Six lines of this stanza are here missing*]

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

YOUTHS

. . . . . .
. . . . . .
Hesper, awaiting thee each sentinel holdeth alarum.
Night veils love's false thieves; thieves still when, Hesper, another
Name, but unalter'd still, thou tak'st them surely, returning.
Yet be the maidens pleas'd in woeful fancy to chide thee.
Maybe for all they chide, their hearts do inly desire thee.

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

VIRGINS

Look in a garden-croft when a flower privily growing,
Hide from grazing kine, by ploughshare never y-broken,

Strok'd by the breeze, by the sun nurs'd sturdily, rear'd by the showers;
Many a wistful boy, and maidens many desire it:

Yet if a slender nail hath nipt his bloom to deflour it,
Never a wistful boy, nor maidens any desire it:

Such is a girl untoy'd with as yet, yet lovely to kinsmen;
Once her body profan'd, her flow'r of chastity blighted,
Boys no more she delights, nor seems so lovely to maidens;

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

YOUTHS

Look as a lone lorn vine in a bare field sorrily growing,
Never an arm uplifts, no grape to maturity ripens,

Only with headlong weight her tender body declining,
Bows, till topmost spray and roots meet feebly together;
Her no peasant swain, nor bullock tendeth her ever:

Yet to the bachelor elm if marriage-fortune unite her,
Many a peasant tills and bullocks many about her;

Such is a maid untoy'd with as yet, in loneliness aging;
Wins she a bridegroom meet, in time's warm fulness arriving,
So to the man more dear, and less unlovely to parents.

O then, clasp thy love, nor fight, fair maiden, against him.
Sin 'twere surely to fight; thy father gave to his arms thee,
Father's self and mother; obey nor wrongly defy them.
. . . . . .

Virgin's crown thou claim'st not alone, but partly the parents,
Father's one whole part, one goes to the mother allotted,
Rests one only to thee; O fight not with them alone thou,
Both to a son their rights and both their dowry deliver.

Hymen O Hymenaeus, O Hymen come Hymenaeus.

LXIII

In a swift ship Attis hasting over ocean a mariner
When he gained the wood, the Phrygian, with a foot of agility,
When he near'd the leafy forest, dark sanctuary divine;
By unearthly fury frenzied, a bewildered agony,
With a flint of edge he shatter'd to the ground his humanity.
Then aghast to see the lost limbs, the deform'd inutility,
While still the gory dabble did anew the soil pollute,
With a snowy palm the woman took affrayed a taborine.
Taborine, the trump that hails thee, Cybele, thy initiant.
Then a dainty finger heaving to the tremulous hide o' the bull,
He began this invocation to the company, spirit-awed.

"To the groves, ye sexless eunuchs, in assembly to Cybele,
Lost sheep that err rebellious to the lady Dindymene;
Ye, who all awing for exile in a country of aliens,
My unearthly rule obeying to be with me, my retinue,
Could ably the surly salt seas' mid inexorability,
Could in utter hate to lewdness your sex dishabilitate;

Let a gong clash glad emotion, set a giddy fury to roam,
All slow delay be banish'd, thither hie ye thither away
To the Phrygian home, the wild wood, to the sanctuary divine;

Where rings the noisy cymbal, taborines are in echoing,
On a curved oat the Phrygian deep pipeth a melody,
With a fury toss the Maenads clad in ivies a frolic head,
To a barbarous ululation the religious orgy wakes,
Where fleets across the silence Cybele's holy family;
Thither hie we, so beseems us; to a mazy measure away."

Thus as Attis, a woman, Attis, not a woman, urg'd the rest,
On a sudden yell'd in huddling agitation every tongue,

Taborines give airy murmur, give a clangorous echo gongs,
With a rush the brotherhood hastens to the woods, the bosom of Ide.
Then in agony, breathless, errant, flush'd wearily, cometh on
Taborine behind him, Attis, thoro' leafy glooms a guide,
As a restive heifer yields not to the cumbrous onerous yoke.
Thither hie the votaress eunuchs with an emulous alacrity.
Now faintly sickly plodding to the goddess's holy shrine,
They took the rest which easeth long toil, nor ate withal.
Slow sleep descends on eyelids ready drowsily to decline,
In a soft repose departeth the devout spirit-agony.
When awoke the sun, the golden, that his eyes heaven-orient
Scann'd lustrous air, the rude seas, earth's massy solidity,
When he smote the shadowy twilight with his healthy team sublime,
Then arous'd was Attis; o'er him sleep hastily fled away
To Pasithea's arms immortal with a tremulous hovering.
But awaked from his reposing, the delirious anguish o'er,
When as Attis' heart recalled him to the past solitarily,
Saw clearly where he stood, what, an annihilate apathy,
With a soul that heaved within him, to the water he fled again.
Then as o'er the waste of ocean with a rainy eye he gazed
To the land of home he murmur'd miserably a soliloquy.

"Mother-home of all affection, dear home, my nativity,
Whom in anguish I deserting, as in hatred a runaway
From a master, hither have hurried to the lonely woods of Ide,

To be with the snows, the wild beasts, in a wintry domicile,
To be near each savage houser that a surly fury provokes,
What horizon, O beloved, may attain to thee anywhere?

Yet an eyeless orb is yearning ineffectually to thee.
For a little ere returneth the delirious hour again.

Shall a homeless Attis hie him to the groves uninhabited?
Shall he leave a country, wealth, friends? bid a sire, a mother, adieu?
The palaestra lost, the forum, the gymnasium, the course?

O unhappy, fall a-weeping, thou unhappy soul, for aye.

For is honour of any semblance, any beauty but of it I?
Who, a woman here, in order was a man, a youth, a boy,
To the sinewy ring a fam'd flower, the gymnasium's applause.

With a throng about the portal, with a populace in the gate,
With a flowery coronal hanging upon every column of home,
When anew my chamber open'd, as awoke the sunny morn.

O am I to live the god's slave? feodary be to Cybele?
Or a Maenad I, an eunuch? or a part of a body slain?

Or am I to range the green tracts upon Ida snowy-chill?
Be beneath the stately caverns colonnaded of Asia?
Be with hind that haunts the covert, or in hursts that house the boar?

Woe, woe the deed accomplish'd! woe, woe, the shame to me!"

From rosy lips ascending when approached the gusty cry
To celestial ears recording such a message inly borne,
Cybele, the thong relaxing from a lion-haled yoke,
Said, aleft the goad addressing to the foe that awes the flocks—

"Come, a service; haste, my brave one; let a fury the madman arm,
Let a fury, a frenzy prick him to return to the wood again,
This is he my hest declineth, the unheedy, the run-away.

From an angry tail refuse not to abide the sinewy stroke,
To a roar let all the regions echo answer everywhere,
On a nervy neck be tossing that uneasy tawny mane."

So in ire she spake, adjusting disunitedly then her yoke
At his own rebuke the lion doth his heart to a fury spur,
With a step, a roar, a bursting unarrested of any brake.
But anear the foamy places when he came, to the frothy beach,
When he saw the sexless Attis by the seas' level opaline,
Then he rushed upon him; affrighted to the wintery wood he flew,
Cybele's for aye, for all years, in her order a votaress
Holy deity, great Cybele, holy lady Dindymene,
Be to me afar for ever that inordinate agony.
O another hound to madness, O another hurry to rage!

LXIV

Born on Pelion height, so legend hoary relateth,
Pines once floated adrift on Neptune billowy streaming
On to the Phasis flood, to the borders Æætean.
Then did a chosen array, rare bloom of valorous Argos,
Fain from Colchian earth her fleece of glory to ravish,
Dare with a keel of swiftness adown salt seas to be fleeting,
Swept with fir-blades oary the fair level azure of Ocean.
Then that deity bright, who keeps in cities her high ward,
Made to delight them a car, to the light breeze airily scudding,
Texture of upright pine with a keel's curved rondure uniting.
That first sailer of all burst ever on Amphitrite.

Scarcely the forward snout tore up that wintery water,
Scarcely the wave foamed white to the reckless harrow of oarsmen,
Straight from amid white eddies arose wild faces of Ocean,
Nereid, earnest-eyed, in wondrous admiration.

Then, not after again, saw ever mortal unharmed
Sea-born Nymphs unveil limbs flushing naked about them,
Stark to the nursing breasts from foam and billow arising.
Then, so stories avow, burn'd Peleus hotly to Thetis,
Then to a mortal lover abode not Thetis unheeding,
Then did a father agree Peleus with Thetis unite him.

O in an aureat hour, O born in bounteous ages,
God-sprung heroes, hail: hail, mother of all benediction,
You my song shall address, you melodies everlasting.
Thee most chiefly, supreme in glory of heavenly bridal,
Peleus, stately defence of Thessaly. Iuppiter even
Gave thee his own fair love, thy mortal pleasure approving.
Thee could Thetis inarm, most beauteous Ocean-daughter?
Tethys adopt thee, her own dear grandchild's wooer usurping?
Ocean, who earth's vast globe with a watery girdle inorbeth?

When the delectable hour those days did fully determine,
Straightway then in crowds all Thessaly flock'd to the palace,
Thronging hosts uncounted, a company joyous approaching.
Many a gift they carry, delight their faces illumines.
Left is Scyros afar, and Phthia's bowery Tempe,
Vacant Crannon's homes, unvisited high Larsa,
Towards Pharsalia's halls, Pharsalia's only they hie them.

Bides no tiller afield; necks soften of oxen in idlesse;
Feel not a prong'd crook'd hoe lush vines all weedily trailing;
Tears no steer deep clods with a downward coulter unearthed;
Prunes no hedger's bill broad-verging verdurous arbours;
Steals a deforming rust on ploughs left rankly to moulder.

But that sovran abode, each sumptuous inly retiring
Chamber, aflame with gold, with silver is all resplendant;

Thrones gleam ivory-white; cup-crown'd blaze brightly the tables;
All the domain with treasure of empery gaudily flushes.

There, set deeply within the remotest centre, a bridal
Bed doth a goddess inarm; smooth ivory glossy from Indies,
Robed in roseate hues, rich seashells' purple adorning.

It was a broidery freak'd with tissue of images olden,
One whose curious art did blazon valour of heroes.
Gazing forth from a beach of Dia the billow-resounding,
Look'd on a vanish'd fleet, on Theseus quickly departing,
Restless in unquell'd passion, a feverous heart, Ariadne.
Scarcely her eyes yet seem their seeming clearly to vision.
You might guess that arous'd from slumber's drowsy betrayal,
Sand-engirded, alone, then first she knew desolation.
He the betrayer—his oars with fugitive hurry the waters
Beat, each promise of old to the winds given idly to bear them.

Him from amid shore-weeds doth Minos' daughter, in anguish
Rigid, a Bacchant-form, dim-gazing stonily follow,
Stonily still, wave-tost on a sea of troublous affliction.
Holds not her yellow locks the tiara's feathery tissue;
Veils not her hidden breast light brede of drapery woven;
Binds not a cincture smooth her bosom's orbed emotion.
Widely from each fair limb that footward-fallen apparel
Drifts its lady before, in billowy salt loose-playing.

Not for silky tiara nor amice gustily floating
Recks she at all any more; thee, Theseus, ever her earnest
Heart, all clinging thought, all chained fancy requireth.
Ah unfortunate! whom with miseries ever crazing,
Thorns in her heart deep planted, affray'd Erycina to madness,

From that earlier hour, when fierce for victory Theseus
Started alert from a beach deep-inleted of Piræus,
Gain'd Gortyna's abode, injurious halls of oppression.

Once, 'tis sung in stories, a dire distemper atoning
Death of an ill-blest prince, Androgeos, angrily slaughter'd,
Taxed of her youthful array, her maidenly bloom fresh-glowing,
Feast to the monster bull, Cecropia, ransom-laden.
Then, when a plague so deadly, the garrison under-mining,
Spent that slender city, his Athens dearly to rescue,
Sooner life Theseus and precious body did offer,
Ere his country to Crete freight corpses, a life in seeming.
So with a ship fast-fleeted, a gale blown gently behind him,
Push'd he his onward journey to Minos' haughty dominion.

Him for very delight when a virgin fondly desiring
Gazed on, a royal virgin, in odours silkly nestled,
Pure from a maiden's couch, from a mother's pillowy bosom,
Like some myrtle, anear Eurotas' water arising,
Like earth's myriad hues, spring's progeny, rais'd to the breezes;
Droop'd not her eyes their gaze unquenchable, ever-burning
Save when in each charm'd limb to the depths enfolded, a sudden
Flame blazed hotly within her, in all her marrow abiding.

O thou cruel of heart, thou madding worker of anguish,
Boy immortal, of whom joy springs with misery blending,
Yea, thou queen of Golgi, of Idaly leaf-embower'd,
O'er what a fire love-lit, what billows wearily tossing,
Drave ye the maid, for a guest so sunnily lock'd deep sighing.
What most dismal alarms her swooning fancy did echo!
Oft what a sallower hue than gold's cold glitter upon her!
Whiles, heart-hungry in arms that monster deadly to combat,
Theseus drew towards death or victory, guerdon of honour.

Yet not lost the devotion, or offer'd idly the virgin's
Gifts, as her unvoic'd lips breathed incense faintly to heaven.

As on Taurus aloft some oak agitatedly waving
Tosses his arms, or a pine cone-mantled, oozily rinded,
When as his huge gnarled trunk in furious eddies a whirlwind
Riving wresteth amain; down falleth he, upward hoven,
Falleth on earth; far, near, all crackles brittle around him,
So to the ground Theseus his fallen foeman abasing,
Slew, that his horned front toss'd vainly, a sport to the breezes.
Thence in safety, a victor, in height of glory returned,
Guiding errant feet to a thread's impalpable order.
Lest, upon egress bent thro' tortuous aisles labyrinthine,
Walls of blindness, a maze unravell'd ever, elude him.

Yet, for again I come to the former story, beseems not
Linger on all done there; how left that daughter a gazing
Father, a sister's arms, her mother woefully clinging,
Mother, who o'er that child moan'd desperate, all heartbroken;
How not in home that maid, in Theseus only delighted;
How her ship on a shore of foaming Dia did harbour;
How, when her eyes lay bound in slumber's shadowy prison,
He forsook, forgot her, a wooer traitorous-hearted:

Oft, say stories, at heart with frenzied fantasy burning,
Pour'd she, a deep-wrung breast, clear-ringing cries of oppression;
Sometimes mournfully clomb to the mountain's rugged ascension,
Straining thence her vision across wide surges of ocean;
Now to the brine ran forth, upsplashing freshly to meet her,
Lifting raiment fine her thighs which softly did open;
Last, when sorrow had end, these words thus spake she lamenting,

While from a mouth tear-stain'd chill sobs gushed dolorous ever.

'Look, is it here, false heart, that rapt from country, from altar,
Household altar ashore, I wander, falsely deserted?
Ah! is it hence, Theseus, that against high heaven a traitor
Homeward thou thy vileness, alas thy perjury bearest?

Might not a thought, one thought, thy cruel counsel abating
Sway thee tender? at heart rose no compassion or any
Mercy, to bend thy soul, or me for pity deliver?

Yet not this thy promise of old, thy dearly remembered
Voice, not these the delights thou bad'st thy poor one inherit;
Nay, but wedlock happy, but envied joy hymeneal;
All now melted in air, with a light wind emptily fleeting.

Let not a woman trust, since the first treason, a lover's
Desperate oath, none hope true lover's promise is earnest.
They, while fondly to win their amorous humour essayeth,
Fear no covetous oath, all false free-promises heed not;
They if once lewd pleasure attain unruly possession,
Lo they fear not promise, of oath or perjury reck not.

Yet indeed, yet I, when floods of death were around thee,
Set thee on high, did rather a brother choose to defend not,
Ere I, in hate's last hour, false heart, fail'd thee to deliver.
Now, for a goodly reward, to the beasts they give me, the flying
Fowls; no handful of earth shall bury me, pass'd to the shadows.

What grim lioness yeaned thee, aneath what rock's desolation?

What wild sea did bear, what billows foamy regorged thee?
Seething sand, or Scylla the snare, or lonely Charybdis?
If for a life's dear joy comes back such only requital?

Hadst not a will with spousal an honour'd wife to receive me?
Awed thee a father stern, cross age's churlish avising?
Yet to your household thou, your kindred palaces olden,
Might'st have led me, to wait, joy-filled, a retainer upon thee,
Now in waters clear thy feet like ivory laving,
Clothing now thy bed with crimson's gorgeous apparel.

Yet to the brutish winds why moan I longer unheeded,
Crazy with an ill wrong? They senseless, voiceless, inhuman
Utter'd cry they hear not, in answers hollow reply not.
He rides far already, the mid sea's boundary cleaving,
Strays no mortal along these weeds stretched lonely about me.
Thus to my utmost need chance, spitefuller injury dealing,
Grudges an ear, where yet might lamentation have entry.

Jove, almighty, supreme, O would that never in early
Time on Gnossian earth great Cecrops' navies had harbour'd,
Ne'er to that unquell'd bull with a ransom of horror atoning,
Moor'd on Crete his cable a shipman's wily dishonour.
Never in youth's fair shape such ruthless stratagem hiding
He, that vile one, a guest found with us a safe habitation.

Whither flee then afar? what hope, poor lost one, upholds thee?
Mountains Idomenean? alas, broad surges of ocean
Part us, a rough rude space of flowing water, asunder.
Trust in a father's help? how trust, whom darkly deserting,
Him I turned to alone, my brother's bloody defier?

Nay, but a loyal lover, a hand pledg'd surely, shall ease me.
Surely; for o'er wide water his oars move flexibly fleeting.

Also a desert lies this region, a tenantless island,
Nowhere open way, seas splash in circle around me,
Nowhere flight, no glimmer of hope; all mournfully silent,
Loneliness all, all points me to death, death only remaining.

Yet these luminous orbs shall sink not feebly to darkness,
Yet from grief-worn limbs shall feeling wholly depart not,
Till to the gods I cry, the betrayed, for justice on evil,
Sue for life's last mercy the great federation of heaven.

Then, O sworn to requite man's evil wrathfully, Powers
Gracious, on whose grim brows, with viper tresses inorbed,
Looks red-breathing forth your bosom's feverous anger;

Now, yea now come surely, to these loud miseries harken,
All I cry, the afflicted, of inmost marrow arising,
Desolate, hot with pain, with blinding fury bewilder'd.

Yet, for of heart they spring, grief's children truly begotten,
Verily, Gods, these moans you will not idly to perish.
But with counsel of evil as he forsook me deceiving,
Death to his house, to his heart, bring also counsel of evil.

When from an anguish'd heart these words stream'd sorrowful upwards,
Words which on iron deeds did sue for deadly requital,
Bow'd with a nod of assent almighty the ruler of heaven.
With that dreadful motion aneath earth's hollow, the ruffled
Ocean shook, and stormy the stars 'gan tremble in ether.
Thereto his heart thick-sown with blindness cloudily dark'ning,
Thought not of all those words, Theseus, from memory fallen,
Words which his heedful soul had kept immovable ever.

Nor to his eager sire fair token of happy returning
Rais'd, when his eyes safe-sighted Erectheus' populous haven.
Once, so stories tell, when Pallas' city behind him
Leaving, Theseus' fleet to the winds given hopefully parted,
Clasping then his son spake Aegeus, straitly commanding.

Son, mine only delight, than life more lovely to gaze on,
Son, whom needs it faints me to launch full-tided on hazards,
Whom my winter of years hath laid so lately before me:

Since my fate unkindly, thy own fierce valour unheeding,
Needs must wrest thee away, ere yet these dimly-lit eyeballs
Feed to the full on thee, thy worshipt body beholding;

Neither in exultation of heart I send thee a-warring;
Nor to the fight shalt bear fair fortune's happier earnest;
Rather, first in cries mine heart shall lighten her anguish,
When greylocks I sully with earth, with sprinkle of ashes;

Next to the swaying mast shall a sail hang duskily swinging;
So this grief, mine own, this burning sorrow within me,
Want not a sign, dark shrouds of Iberia, sombre as iron.

Then, if haply the queen, lone ranger on haunted Itonus,
Pleas'd to defend our people, Erectheus' safe habitations,
Frown not, allow thine hand that bull all redly to slaughter,

Look that warily then deep-laid in steady remembrance,
These our words grow greenly, nor age move on to deface them;

Soon as on home's fair hills thine eyes shall signal a welcome,
See that on each straight yard down droop their funeral housings,

Whitely the tight-strung cordage a sparkling canvas aloft swing,

Which to behold straightway with joy shall cheer me, with inward
Joy, when a prosperous hour shall bring to thee happy returning.

So for a while that charge did Theseus faithfully cherish.
Last, it melted away, as a cloud which riven in ether
Breaks to the blast, high peak and spire snow-silvery leaving.
But from a rock's wall'd eyrie the father wistfully gazing,
Father whose eyes, care-dimm'd, wore hourly for ever aweeping,
Scarcely the wind-puff'd sail from afar 'gan darken upon him,
Down the precipitous heights headlong his body he hurried,
Deeming Theseus surely by hateful destiny taken.
So to a dim death-palace, alert from victory, Theseus
Came, what bitter sorrow to Minos' daughter his evil
Perjury gave, himself with an even sorrow atoning.
She, as his onward keel still moved, still mournfully follow'd;
Passion-stricken, her heart a tumultuous image of ocean.

Also upon that couch, flush'd youthfully, breathless Iacchus
Roam'd with a Satyr-band, with Nisa-begot Sileni;
Seeking thee, Ariadna, aflame thy beauty to ravish,
Wildly behind they rushed and wildly before to the folly,
Euhoe rav'd, Euhoe with fanatic heads gyrated;
Some in womanish hands shook rods cone-wreathed above them,
Some from a mangled steer toss'd flesh yet gorily streaming;
Some girt round them in orbs, snakes gordian, intertwining;
Some with caskets deep did blazon mystical emblems,

Emblems muffled darkly, nor heard of spirit unholy.
Part with a slender palm taborines beat merrily jangling;
Now with a cymbal slim would a sharp shrill tinkle awaken;
Often a trumpeter horn blew murmurous, hoarsely resounding.
Rose on pipes barbaric a jarring music of horror.

Such, wrought rarely, the shapes this quilt did richly apparel,
Where to the couch close-clasped it hung thick veils of adorning.
So to the full heart-sated of all their curious eying,
Thessaly's youth gave place to the Gods high-throned in heaven.
As, when dawn is awake, light Zephyrus even-breathing
Brushes a sleeping sea, which slant-wise curved in edges
Breaks, while mounts Aurora the sun's high journey to welcome;
They, first smitten faintly by his most airy caressing,
Move slow on, light surges a plashing silvery laughter;
Soon with a waxing wind they crowd them apace, thick-fleeting,
Swim in a rose-red glow and far off sparkle in Ocean;
So thro' column'd porch and chambers sumptuous hieing,
Thither or hither away, that company, stream'd, home-wending.

First from Pelion height, when they were duly departed,
Chiron came, in his hand green gifts of flowery forest,
All that on earth's leas blooms, what blossoms Thessaly nursing
Breeds on mountainous heights, what near each showery river
Swells to the warm west-wind, in gales of foison alighting;
These did his own hands bear in girlonds twined of all hues,
That to the perfume sweet for joy laugh'd gaily the palace.
Follow'd straight Penios, awhile his bowery Tempe,

Tempe, shrined around in shadowy woods o'erhanging,
Left to the bare-limb'd maids Magnesian, airily ranging.
No scant carrier he; tall root-torn beeches his heavy
Burden, bays stemm'd stately, in heights exalted ascending.
Thereto the nodding plane, and that lithe sister of youthful
Phaethon flame-enwrapt, and cypress in air upspringing:
These in breadths inwoven he heap'd close-twin'd to the palace,
Whereto the porch wox green, with soft leaves canopied over.

Him did follow anear, deep heart and wily, Prometheus,
Scarr'd and wearing yet dim traces of early dishonour,
All which of old his body to flint fast-welded in iron,
Bore and dearly abied, on slippery crags suspended.
Last with his awful spouse, with children goodly, the sovran
Father approach'd; thou, Phoebus, alone, his warder in heaven,
Left, with that dear sister, on Idrus ranger eternal.
Peleus sister alike and brother in high misprison
Held, nor lifted a torch when Thetis wedded at even.
So when on ivory thrones they rested, snowily gleaming,
Many a feast high-pil'd did load each table about them;
Whiles to a tremor of age their gray infirmity rocking,
Busy began that chant which speaketh surely the Parcae.

Round them a folding robe their weak limbs aguish hiding,
Fell bright-white to the feet, with a purple border of issue.
Wreaths sat on each hoar crown, whose snows flush'd rosy beneath them;
Still each hand fulfilled its pious labour eternal.
Singly the left upbore in wool soft-hooded a distaff,
Whereto the right large threads down drawing deftly, with upturn'd
Fingers shap'd them anew; then thumbs earth-pointed in even
Balance twisted a spindle on orb'd wheels smoothly rotating.

So clear'd softly between and tooth-nipt even it ever
Onward moved; still clung on wan lips, sodden as ashes,
Shreds all woolly from out that soft smooth surface arisen.
Lastly before their feet lay fells, white, fleecy, refulgent,
Warily guarded they in baskets woven of osier.
They, as on each light tuft their voice smote louder approaching,
Pour'd grave inspiration, a prophet chant to the future,
Chant which an after-time shall tax of vanity never.

O IN valorous acts thy wondrous glory renewing,
Rich Aemathia's arm, great sire of a goodlier issue,
Hark on a joyous day what prophet-story the sisters
Open surely to thee; and you, what followeth after,
Guide to a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Soon shall approach, and bear the delight long-wish'd for of husbands,
Hesper, a bride shall approach in starlight happy presented,
Softly to sway thy soul in love's completion abiding,
Soon in a trance with thee of slumber dreamy to mingle,
Making smooth round arms thy clasp'd throat sinewy pillow.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Never hath house closed yet o'er loves so blissful uniting,
Never love so well his children in harmony knitten,
So as Thetis agrees, as Peleus bendeth according.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

You shall a son see born that knows not terror, Achilles,
One whose back no foe, whose front each knoweth in onset;
Often a conqueror, he, where feet course swiftly together,
Steps of a fire-fleet doe shall leave in his hurry behind him.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Him to resist in war, no champion hero ariseth,
Then on Phrygian earth when carnage Trojan is utter'd;

Then when a long sad strife shall Troy's crown'd city beleaguer,
Waste her a third false heir from Pelops wary descending.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

His unmatchable acts, his deeds of glorious honour,
Oft shall mothers speak o'er sons untimely departed;
While from crowns earth-bow'd fall loosen'd silvery tresses,
Beat on shrivell'd breasts weak palms their dusky defacing.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

As some labourer ears close-cluster'd lustily lopping,
Under a flaming sun, mows fields ripe-yellow in harvest,
So, in fury of heart, shall death's stern reaper, Achilles,
Charge Troy's children afield and fell them grimly with iron.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Deeds of such high glory Scamander's river avoucheth,
Hurried in eddies afar thro' boisterous Hellespontus;
Then when a slaughter'd heap his pathway watery choking,
Brimmeth a warm red tide and blood with water allieth.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Voucher of him last riseth a prey untimely devoted
E'en to the tomb, which mounded in heaps, high, spherical, earthen,
Grants to the snow-white limbs, to the stricken maiden a welcome.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Scarcely the war-worn Greeks shall win such favour of heaven,
Neptune's bonds of stone from Dardan city to loosen,
Dankly that high-heav'd grave shall gory Polyxena crimson.
She as a lamb falls smitten a twin-edg'd falchion under,

Boweth on earth weak knees, her limbs down flingeth unheeding.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Up then, fair paramours, in fond love happily mingle.
Now in blessed treaty the bridegroom welcome a goddess;
Now give a bride long-veil'd to her husband's passionate yearning.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny, spindles.

Her when duly the nurse with day-light early revisits,
Necklace of yester-night—she shall not clasp it about her.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny spindles.

Nor shall a mother fond, o'er brawls unlovely dishearten'd,
Lay her alone, or cease the delight of children awaiting.
Trail ye a long-drawn thread and run with destiny spindles.

In such prelude old, such good-night ditty to Peleus,
Sang their deep divination, ineffably, holy, the Parcae.
Such as in ages past, upon houses godly descending,
Houses of heroes came, in mortal company present,
Gods high-throned in heaven, while yet was worship in honour.

Often a sovran Jove, in his own bright temple appearing,
Yearly, whene'er his day did rites ceremonial usher,
Gazed on an hundred slain, on strong bulls heavily falling.
Often on high Parnassus a roving Liber in hurried
Frenzy the Thyiads drave, their locks blown loosely, before him.
While all Delphi's city in eager jealousy trooping,
Blithely receiv'd their god on fuming festival altars.
Mavors often amidst encounter mortal of armies,
Streaming Triton's queen, or maid Ramnusian awful,
Stood in body before them, a fainting host to deliver.

Only when heinous sin earth's wholesome purity blasted,
When from covetous hearts fled justice sadly retreating,
Then did a brother his hands dye deep in blood of a brother,
Lightly the son forgat his parents' piteous ashes.
Lightly the son's young grave his father pray'd for, an unwed
Maiden, a step-dame fair in freer luxury clasping.
Then did mother unholy to son that knew not abase her,
Shamefully, fear'd not unholy the blessed dead to dishonour.
Human, inhuman alike, in wayward infamy blending,
Turned far from us away that righteous counsel of heaven.
Therefore proudly the Gods such sinful company view not,
Bear not day-light clear upon immortality breathing.

LXV

Though, outworn with sorrow, with hours of torturous anguish,
Ortalus, I no more tarry the Muses among;
Though from a fancy deprest fair blooms of poesy budding
Rise not at all; such grief rocks me, uneasily stirr'd:

Coldly but even now mine own dear brother in ebbing
Lethe his ice-wan feet laveth, a shadowy ghost.
He whom Troy's deep bosom, a shore Rhoetean above him,
Rudely denies these eyes, heavily crushes in earth.

Ah! no more to address thee, or hear thy kindly replying,
Brother! O e'en than life round me delightfuller yet,
Ne'er to behold thee again! Still love shall fail not alone in
Fancy to muse death's dark elegy, closely to weep.
Closely as under boughs of dimmest shadow the pensive
Daulian ever moans Itys in agony slain.

Yet mid such desolation a verse I tender of ancient
Battiades, new-drest, Ortalus, wholly for you.

Lest to the roving winds these words all idly deliver'd,
Seem too soon from a frail memory fallen away.

E'en as a furtive gift, sent, some love-apple, a-wooing,
Leaps from breast of a coy maiden, a canopy pure;
There forgotten alas, mid vestments silky reposing,—
Soon as a mother's step starts her, it hurleth adown:
Straight to the ground, dash'd forth ungently, the gift shoots headlong;
She in tell-tale cheeks glows a disorderly shame.

LXVI

He whose glance scann'd clearly the lights uncounted of ether,
Found when arises a star, sinks in his haven again,
How yon eclipsed sun glares luminous obscuration,
How in seasons due vanishes orb upon orb;
How 'neath Latmian heights fair Trivia stealthily banish'd
Falls, from her upward path lured by a lover awhile;
That same sage, that Conon, lock of great Berenice
Saw me, in heavenly-bright deification afar
Lustrous, a gleaming glory; to gods full many devoted,
Whiles she her arms in prayer lifted, as ivory smooth;
In that glorious hour when, flush'd with a new hymeneal,
Hotly the King to deface outer Assyria sped,
Bearing ensigns sweet of that soft struggle a night brings,
When from a virgin's arms spoils he had happily won.

Stands it an edict true that brides hate Venus? or ever
Falsely the parents' joy dashes a showery tear,
When to the nuptial door they come in rainy beteeming?
Now to the Gods I swear, tears be hypocrisy then.
So mine own queen taught me in all her weary lamentings,
Whiles her bridegroom bold set to the battle a face.
What? for an husband lost thou weptst not gloomily lying?
Rather a brother dear, forced for a while to depart?
This, when love's sharp grief was gnawing inly to waste thee!
Ah poor wife! whose soul steep'd in unhappiness all,

Fell from reason away, nor abode thy senses! A nobler
Spirit had I erewhile known thee, a fiery child.

Pass'd that deed forgotten, a royal wooer had earn'd thee?
Deed that braver none ventureth ever again?
Yet what sorrow to lose thy lord, what murmur of anguish!
Jove, how rain'd those tears brush'd from a passionate eye!
Who is this could wean thee, a God so mighty, to falter?
May not a lover live from the beloved afar?
Then for a spouse so goodly, before each spirit of heaven,
Me thou vowd'st, with slain oxen, a vast hecatomb,
Home if again he alighted. Awhile and Asia crouching
Humbly to Egypt's realm added a boundary new;
I, in starry return to the ranks dedicated of heaven,
Debt of an ancient vow sum in a bounty to-day.

Full of sorrow was I, fair queen, thy brows to abandon,
Full of sorrow; in oath answer, adorable head.
Evil on him that oath who sweareth falsely soever!
Yet in a strife with steel who can a victory claim?
Steel could a mountain abase, no loftier any thro' heaven's
Cupola Thia's child lifteth his axle above,
Then, when a new-born sea rose Mede-uplifted; in Athos'
Centre his ocean-fleet floated a barbarous host.
What shall a weak tress do, when powers so mighty resist not?
Jove! may Chalybes all perish, a people accurst,
Perish who earth's hid veins first labour'd dimly to quarry,
Clench'd in a molten mass iron, a ruffian heart!

Scarcely the sister-locks were parted dolefully weeping,
Straight that brother of young Memnon, in Africa born,
Came, and shook thro' heaven his pennons oary, before me,
Winged, a queen's proud steed, Locrian Arsinoë.
So flew with me aloft thro' darkening shadow of heaven,
There to a god's pure breast laid me, to Venus's arms.
Him Zephyritis' self had sent to the task, her servant,
She from realms of Greece borne to Canopus of yore.

There, that at heav'n's high porch, not one sole crown,
Ariadne's,
Golden above those brows Ismaros' youth did adore,
Starry should hang, set alone; but luminous I might glisten,
Vow'd to the Gods, bright spoil won from an aureat
head;
While to the skies I clomb still ocean-dewy, the Goddess
Placed me amid star-spheres primal, a glory to be.

Close to the Virgin bright, to the Lion sulkily gleaming,
Nigh Callisto, a cold child Lycaonian, I
Wheel obliquely to set, and guide yon tardy Bootes
Where scarce late his car dewy descends to the sea.
Yet tho' nightly the Gods' immortal steps be above me,
Tho' to the white waves dawn gives me, to Tethys, again;
(Maid of Ramnus, a grace I here implore thee, if any
Word should offend; so much cannot a terror alarm,
I should veil aught true; not tho' with clamorous uproar
Rend me the stars; I speak verities hidden at heart):
Lightly for all I reck, so more I sorrow to part me
Sadly from her I serve, part me forever away.
With her, a virgin as yet, I quaff'd no sumptuous essence;
With her, a bride, I drain'd many a prodigal oil.

Now, O you whom gladly the marriage cresset uniteth,
See to the bridegroom fond yield ye not amorous arms,
Throw not back your robes, nor bare your bosom assenting,
Save from an onyx stream sweetness, a bounty to me.
Yours, in a loyal bed which seek love's privilege, only;
Yieldeth her any to bear loathed adultery's yoke,
Vile her gifts, and lightly the dust shall drink them unheeding.
Not of vile I seek gifts, nor of infamous, I.
Rather, O unstain'd brides, may concord tarry for ever
With ye at home, may love with ye for ever abide.
Thou, fair queen, to the stars if looking haply, to Venus
Lights thou kindle on eves festal of high sacrifice,

Leave me the lock, thine own, nor blood nor bounty requiring.
Rather a largesse fair pay to me, envy me not.
Stars dash blindly in one! so might I glitter a royal
Tress, let Orion glow next to Aquarius' urn.

LXVII

CATULLUS

O to the goodman fair, O welcome alike to the father,
Hail, and Jove's kind grace shower his help upon you!
Door, that of old, men say, wrought Balbus ready obeisance,
Once, when his home, time was, lodged him, a master in years;
Door, that again, men say, grudg'd aught but a spiteful obeisance,
Soon as a corpse outstretch'd starkly declar'd you a bride.
Come, speak truly to me; what shameful rumour avouches
Duty of years forsworn, honour in injury lost?

DOOR

So be the tenant new, Caecilius, happy to own me,
I'm not guilty, for all jealousy says it is I.
Never a fault was mine, nor man shall whisper it ever;
Only, my friend, your mob's noisy "The door is a rogue."
Comes to the light some mischief, a deed uncivil arising,
Loudly to me shout all, "Door, you are wholly to blame."

CATULLUS

'Tis not enough so merely to say, so think to decide it.
Better, who wills should feel, see it, who wills, to be true.

DOOR

How then? if here none asks, nor labours any to know it.

CATULLUS

Nay, *I* ask it; away scruple; your hearer is I.

DOOR

First, what rumour avers, they gave her to us a virgin—
They lie on her. A light lady! be sure, not alone
Clipp'd her an husband first; weak stalk from a garden, a pointless
Falchion, a heart did ne'er fully to courage awake.
No; to the son's own bed, 'tis said, that father ascended,
Vilely; with act impure stain'd the facinorous house.
Whether a blind fierce lust in his heart burnt sinfully flaming,
Or that inert that son's vigour, amort to delight,
Needed a sturdier arm, that franker quality somewhere,
Looser of youth's fast-bound girdle, a virgin as yet.

CATULLUS

Truly a noble father, a glorious act of affection!
Thus in a son's kind sheets lewdly to puddle, his own.

DOOR

Yet not alone of this, her crag Chinaean abiding
Under, a watch-tower set warily, Brixia tells,
Brixia, trails whereby his waters Mella the golden,
Mother of her, mine own city, Verona the fair.
Add Postumius yet, Cornelius also, a twice-told
Folly, with whom our light mistress adultery knew.
Asks some questioner here "What? a door, yet privy to lewdness?
You, from your owner's gate never a minute away?
Strange to the talk o' the town? since here, stout timber above you,
Hung to the beam, you shut mutely or open again."
Many a shameful time I heard her stealthy profession,
While to the maids her guilt softly she hinted alone.
Spoke unabash'd her amours and named them singly, opining
Haply an ear to record fail'd me, a voice to reveal.

There was another; enough; his name I gladly dissemble;
Lest his lifted brows blush a disorderly rage.
Sir, 'twas a long lean suitor; a process huge had assail'd him;
'Twas for a pregnant womb falsely declar'd to be true.

LXVIII

If, when fortune's wrong with bitter misery whelms thee,
Thou thy sad tear-scrawl'd letter, a mark to the storm,
Send'st, and bid'st me to succour a stranded seaman of Ocean,
Toss'd in foam, from death's door to return thee again;
Whom nor softly to rest love's tender sanctity suffers,
Lost on a couch of lone slumber, unhappily lain;
Nor with melody sweet of poets hoary the Muses
Cheer, while worn with grief nightly the soul is awake:
Well-contented am I, that thou thy friendship avowest,
Ask'st the delights of love from me, the pleasure of hymns;
Yet lest all unnoted a kindred story bely thee,
Deeming, Mallius, I calls of humanity shun;
Hear what a grief is mine, what storm of destiny whelms me.
Cease to demand of a soul's misery joy's sacrifice.

Once, what time white robes of manhood first did array me,
Whiles in jollity life sported a spring holiday,
Youth ran riot enow; right well she knows me, the Goddess,
She whose honey delights blend with a bitter annoy.
Henceforth dies sweet pleasure, in anguish lost of a brother's
Funeral. O poor soul, brother, O heavily ta'en,
You all happier hours, you, dying brother, effaced;
All our house lies low mournfully buried in you;
Quench'd untimely with you joy waits not ever a morrow,
Joy which alive your love's bounty fed hour upon hour;

Now, since thou liest dead, heart-banish'd wholly desert me
Vanities all, each gay freak of a riotous heart.

How then obey? You write 'Let not Verona, Catullus,
Stay thee, if here each proud quality, Rome's eminence,
Freely the light limbs warms thou leavest coldly to languish,'
Infamy lies not there, Mallius, only regret.
So forgive me, if I, whom grief so rudely bereaveth,
Deal not a joy myself know not, a beggar in all.
Books—if they're but scanty, a store full meagre, around me,
Rome is alone my life's centre, a mansion of home,
Rome my abode, house, hearth; there wanes and waxes a life's span;
Hither of all those choice cases attends me but one.
Therefore deem not thou aught spiteful bids me deny thee;
Say not 'his heart is false, haply, to jealousy leans,'
If nor books I send nor flatter sorrow to silence.
Trust me, were either mine, either unask'd should appear.

Goddesses, hide I may not in how great trial upheld me
Allius, how no faint charities held me to life.
Nor shall time borne fleetly nor years' oblivion ever
Make such zeal to the night fade, to the darkness, away.
As from me you learn it, of you shall many a thousand
Learn it again. Grow old, scroll, to declare it anew.
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
So to the dead increase honour in year upon year.
Nor to the spider, aloft her silk-slight flimsiness hanging,
Allius aye unswept moulder, a memory dim.

Well you wot, how sore the deceit Amathusia wrought me,
Well what a thing in love's treachery made me to fall;

Ready to burst in flame, as burn Trinacrian embers,
Burn near Thermopylae's Oeta the fiery springs.
Sad, these piteous eyes did waste all wearily weeping,
Sad, these cheeks did rain ceaseless a showery woe.
Wakeful, as hill-born brook, which, afar off silvery gleaming,
O'er his moss-grown crags leaps with a tumble a-down;
Brook which awhile headlong o'er steep and valley descending,
Crosses anon wide ways populous, hastes to the street;
Cheerer in heats o' the sun to the wanderer heavily fuming,
Under a drought, when fields swelter agape to the sky.

Then as tossing shipmen amid black surges of Ocean,
See some prosperous air gently to calm them arise,
Safe thro' Pollux' aid or Castor, alike entreated;
Mallius e'en such help brought me, a warder of harm.
He in a closed field gave scope of liberal entry;
Gave me an house of love, gave me the lady within,
Busily there to renew love's even duty together;
Thither afoot mine own mistress, a deity bright,
Came, and planted firm her sole most sunny; beneath her
Lightly the polish'd floor creak'd to the sandal again.

So with passion aflame came wistful Laodamia
Into her husband's home, Protesilaus, of yore;
Home o'er-lightly begun, ere slaughter'd victim atoning
Waited of heaven's high-thron'd company grace to agree.
Nought be to me so dear, O Maid Ramnusian, ever,
I should against that law match me with opposite I.
Bloodless of high sacrifice, how thirsts each desolate altar!
This, when her husband fell, Laodamia did heed,
Rapt from a bridegroom new, from his arms forced early to part her.
Early; for hardly the first winter, another again,
Yet in many a night's long dream had sated her yearning,
So that love might wear cheerily, the master away;
Which not long should abide, so presag'd surely the Parcae,
If to the wars her lord hurry, for Ilion arm.

Now to revenge fair Helen, had Argos' chiefs, her puissance,
Set them afield; for Troy rous'd them, a cry not of home,
Troy, dark death universal, of Asia grave and Europe,
Altar of heroes Troy, Troy of heroical acts,
Now to my own dear brother abhorred worker of ancient
Death. Ah woeful soul, brother, unhappily lost,
Ah fair light unblest, in darkness sadly receding,
All our house lies low, brother, inearthed in you,
Quench'd untimely with you, joy waits not ever a morrow,
Joy which alive your love's bounty fed hour upon hour.
Now on a distant shore, no kind mortality near him,
Far all household love, every familiar urn,
Tomb'd in Troy the malign, in Troy the unholy reposing,
Strangely the land's last verge holds him, a dungeon of
earth.

Thither in haste all Greece, one armed people assembling,
Flock'd on an ancient day, left the recesses of home,
Lest in a safe content, unreach'd, his stolen adultress
Paris inarm, in soft luxury quietly lain.

E'en such chance, fair queen, such misery, Laodamia,
Brought thee a loss as life precious, as heavenly breath,
Loss of a bridegroom dear; such whirling passion in eddies
Suck'd thee adown, so drew sheer to a sudden abyss,
Deep as Graian abyss near Pheneos o'er Cyllene,
Strainer of ooze impure milk'd from a watery fen;
Hewn, so stories avouch, in a mountain's kernel; an hero
Hew'd it, falsely declar'd Amphytrionian, he,
When those monster birds near grim Stymphalus his arrow
Smote to the death; such task bade him a dastardly lord.
So that another God might tread that portal of heaven
Freely, nor Hebe fair wither a chaste eremite.
Yet than abyss more deep thy love, thy depth of emotion;
Love which school'd thy lord, made of a master a thrall.

Not to a grandsire old so priz'd, so lovely the grandson
One dear daughter alone rears i' the soft of his years;
He, long-wish'd for, an heir of wealth ancestral arriving,—

Scarcely the tablets' marge holds him, a name to the will,
Straight all hopes laugh'd down, each baffled kinsman usurping
Leaves to repose white hairs, stretches, a vulture away;
Not in her own fond mate so turtle snowy delighteth,
Tho' unabash'd, 'tis said, she the voluptuous hours
Snatches a thousand kisses, in amorous extasy biting.
Yet, more lightly than all ranges a womanly will.
Great their love, their frenzy; but all their frenzy before thee
Fail'd, once clasp'd thy lord splendid in aureat hair.

Worthy in all or part thee, Laodamia, to rival,
Sought me my own sweet love, journey'd awhile to my arms.
Round her playing oft ran Cupid thither or hither,
Lustrous, array'd in bright broidery, saffron of hue.
What, to Catullus alone if a wayward fancy resort not?
Must I pale for a stray frailty, the shame of an hour?
Nay; lest all too much such jealous folly provoke her.
Juno's self, a supreme glory celestial, oft
Crushes her eager rage, in wedlock-injury flaring,
Knowing yet right well Jove, what a losel is he.

Yet, for a man with Gods shall never lawfully match him

[*Eighteen lines are here missing*]

Lift thy father, a weak burden, upholpen, abhorr'd.
Not that a father's hand my love led to me, nor odours
Wafted her home on rich airs, of Assyria born;
Stealthy the gifts she gave me, a night unspeakable o'er us,
Gifts from her husband's dreams verily stolen, his own.
Then 'tis enough for me, if mine, mine only remaineth
That one day, whose stone shines with an happier hue.

So, it is all I can, take, Allius, answer, a little
Verse to requite thy much friendship, a contrary boon.

So your household names no rust nor seamy defacing
Soil this day, that new morrow, the next to the last.
Gifts full many to these heaven send as largely requiting,
Gifts Themis ever wont deal to the pious of yore.
Joys come plenty to thee, to thy own fair lady together,
Come to that house of mirth, come to the lady within;
Joy to the forward friend, our love's first fashioner, Anser,
Author of all this fair history, founder of all.
Lastly beyond them, above them, on her more lovely than even
Life, my lady, for whose life it is happy to be.

LXIX

Rufus, it is no wonder if yet no woman assenting
Softly to thine embrace tender a delicate arm.
Not tho' a gift should seek, some robe most filmy, to move her;
Not for a cherish'd gem's clarity, lucid of hue.

Deep in a valley, thy arms, such evil story maligns thee,
Rufus, a villain goat houses, a grim denizen.
All are afraid of it, all; what wonder? a rascally creature,
Verily! not with such company dally the fair.

Slay, nor pity the brute, our nostril's rueful aversion.
Else admire not if each ravisher angrily fly.

LXX

Saith my lady to me, no man shall wed me, but only
Thou; no other if e'en Jove should approach me to woo;
Yea; but a woman's words, when a lover fondly desireth,
Limn them on ebbing floods, write on a wintery gale.

LXXII

Lesbia, thou didst swear thou knewest only Catullus,
Cared'st not, if him thine arms chained, a Jove to retain.
Then not alone I loved thee, as each light lover a mistress,
Lov'd as a father his own sons, or an heir to the name.

Now I know thee aright; so, if more hotly desiring,
Yet must count thee a soul cheaper, a frailty to scorn.
'Friend,' thou say'st 'you cannot.' Alas! such injury leaveth
Blindly to doat poor love's folly, malignly to will.

LXXIII

Never again think any to work aught kindly soever,
Dream that in any abides honour, of injury free.
Love is a debt in arrear; time's parted service avails not;
Rather is only the more sorrow, a heavier ill:
Chiefly to me, whom none so fierce, so deadly deceiving
Troubleth, as he whose friend only but inly was I.

LXXIV

Gellius heard that his uncle in ire exploded, if any
Dared, some wanton, a fault practise, a levity speak.
Not to be slain himself, see Gellius handle his uncle's
Lady; no Harpocrates muter, his uncle is hush'd.
So what he aim'd at, arriv'd at, anon let Gellius e'en this
Uncle abuse; not a word yet will his uncle assay.

LXXVIII

Brothers twain has Gallus, of whom one owns a delightful
Son; his brother a fair lady, delightfuller yet.
Gallant sure is Gallus, a pair so dainty uniting;
Lovely the lady, the lad lovely, a company sweet.
Foolish sure is Gallus, an o'er-incurious husband;
Uncle, a wife once taught luxury, stops not at one.

LXXIX

Lesbius, handsome is he. Why not? if Lesbia loves him
Far above all your tribe, angry Catullus, or you.
Only let all your tribe sell off, and follow, Catullus,
Kiss but his handsome lips children, a plenary three.

LXXXI

What? not in all this city, Juventius, ever a gallant
Poorly to win love's fresh favour of amorous you,
Only the lack-love signor, a wretch from sickly Pisaurum,
Guest of your hearth, no gilt statue as ashy as he?
Now your very delight, whose faithless fancy Catullus
Banisheth. Ah light-reck'd lightness, apostasy vile!

LXXXII

Wouldst thou, Quintius, have me a debtor ready to owe thee
Eyes, or if earth have joy goodlier any than eyes?
One thing take not from me, to me more goodly than even
Eyes, or if earth have joy goodlier any than eyes.

LXXXIII

Lesbia while her lord stands near, rails ever upon me.
This to the fond weak fool seemeth a mighty delight.
Dolt, you see not at all. Could she forget me, to rail not,
Nought were amiss; if now scold she, or if she revile,
'Tis not alone to remember; a shrewder stimulus arms her,
Anger; her heart doth burn verily, thus to revile.

LXXXIV

Stipends Arrius ever on opportunity *shtipends,*
Ambush as *hambush* still Arrius used to declaim.
Then, hoped fondly the words were a marvel of articulation,
While with an *h* immense '*Thambush*' arose from his heart.
So his mother of old, so e'en spoke Liber his uncle,
Credibly; so grandsire, grandam alike did agree.

Syria took him away; all ears had rest for a moment;
Lightly the lips those words, slightly could utter again.

None was afraid any more of a sound so clumsy returning;
Sudden a solemn fright seized us, a message arrives.
'News from Ionia country; the sea, since Arrius enter'd,
Changed; 'twas *Ionian* once, now 'twas *Hionian* all.'

LXXXV

Half I hate, half love. How so? one haply requireth.
Nay, I know not; alas feel it, in agony groan.

LXXXVI

Lovely to many a man is Quintia; shapely, majestic,
Stately, to me; each point singly 'tis easy to grant.
'Lovely' the whole, I grant not; in all that bodily largeness,
Lives not a grain of salt, breathes not a charm anywhere.
Lesbia—she is lovely, an even temper of utmost
Beauty, that every charm stealeth of every fair.

LXXXVII & LXXV

Ne'er shall woman avouch herself so rightly beloved,
Friend, as rightly thou art, Lesbia, lovely to me.
Ne'er was a bond so firm, no troth so faithfully plighted,
Such as against our love's venture in honour am I.

Now so sadly my heart, dear Lesbia, draws me asunder,
So in her own misspent worship uneasily lost,
Wert thou blameless in all, I may not longer approve thee,
Do anything thou wilt, cannot an enemy be.

LXXVI

If to a man bring joy past service dearly remember'd,
When to the soul her thought speaks, to be blameless of ill;
Faith not rudely profan'd, nor in oath or charter abused
Heaven, a God's mis-sworn sanctity, deadly to men.
Then doth a life-long pleasure await thee surely, Catullus,
Pleasure of all this love's traitorous injury born.

Whatso a man may speak, whom charity leads to another,
Whatso enact, by me spoken or acted is all.
Waste on a traitorous heart, nor finding kindly requital.
Therefore cease, nor still bleed agoniz'd any more.

Make thee as iron a soul, thyself draw back from affliction.
Yea, tho' a God say nay, be not unhappy for aye.
What? it is hard long love so lightly to leave in a moment?
Hard; yet abides this one duty, to do it: obey.
Here lies safety alone, one victory must not fail thee.
One last stake to be lost haply, perhaps to be won.

O great Gods immortal, if you can pity or ever
Lighted above dark death's shadow, a help for the lost;
Ah! look, a wretch, on me; if white and blameless in all I
Liv'd, then take this long canker of anguish away.
If to my inmost veins, like dull death drowsily creeping,
Every delight, all heart's pleasure it wholly benumbs.

Not anymore I pray for a love so faulty returning,
Not that a wanton abide chastely, she may not again.
Only for health I ask, a disease so deadly to banish.
Gods vouchsafe it, as I ask, that am harmless of ill.

LXXVII

Rufus, a friend so vainly believ'd, so wrongly relied in,
(Vainly? alas the reward fail'd not, a heavier ill;)
Could'st thou thus steal on me, a lurking viper, an aching
Fire to the bones, nor leave aught to delight any more?
Nought to delight any more! ah cruel poison of equal
Lives! ah breasts that grew each to the other awhile!
Yet far most this grieves me, to think thy slaver abhorred
Foully my own love's lips soileth, a purity rare.
Thou shalt surely atone thine injury: centuries harken,
Know thee afar; grow old, fame, to declare him anew.

LXXXVIII

Gellius, how if a man in lust with a mother, a sister
Rioteth, one uncheck'd night, to iniquity bare?
How if a man's dark passion an aunt's own chastity spare not?
Canst thou tell what vast infamy lieth on him?

Infamy lieth on him, no farthest Tethys, or ancient
Ocean, of hundred streams father, abolisheth yet.
Infamy none o'ersteps, nor ventures any beyond it.
Not tho' a scorpion heat melt him, his own paramour.

LXXXIX

Gellius—he's full meagre. It is no wonder, a friendly
Mother, a sister is his loveable, healthy withal.
Then so friendly an uncle, a world of pretty relations.
Must not a man so blest meagre abide to the last?
Yea, let his hand touch only what hands touch only to trespass;
Reason enough to become meagre, enough to remain,

XC

Rise from a mother's shame with Gellius hatefully wedded,
One to be taught gross rites Persic, a Magian he.
Weds with a mother a son, so needs should a Magian issue,
Save in her evil creed Persia determineth ill.
Then shall a son, so born, chant down high favour of heaven,
Melting lapt in flame fatly the slippery caul.

XCI

Think not a hope so false rose, Gellius, in me to find thee
Faithful in all this love's anguish ineffable yet,
For that in heart I knew thee, had in thee honour imagin'd,
Held thee a soul to abhor vileness or any reproach.

Only in her, I knew, thou found'st not a mother, a sister,
Her that awhile for love wearily made me to pine.
Yea tho' mutual use did bind us straitly together,
Scarcely methought could lie cause to desert me therein.

Thou found'st reason enow; so joys thy spirit in every
Shame, wherever is aught heinous, of infamy born.

XCII

Lesbia doth but rail, rail ever upon me, nor endeth
Ever. A life I stake, Lesbia loves me at heart.
Ask me a sign? Our scorn runs parallel. I that abuse her
Ever, a life to the stake, Lesbia, love thee at heart.

XCIII

Lightly methinks I reck if Cæsar smile not upon me:
Care not, whether a white, whether a swarth-skin, is he.

XCIV

Mentula—wanton is he; his calling sure is a wanton's.
Herbs to the pot, 'tis said wisely, the name to the man.

XCV

Nine times winter had end, nine times flush'd summer in harvest,
Ere to the world gave forth Cinna, the labour of years,
Zmyrna; but in one month Hortensius hundred on hundred
Verses, an unripe birth feeble, of hurry begot.

Zmyrna to far Satrachus, to the stream of Cyprus, ascendeth;
Zmyrna with eyes unborn study the centuries hoar.
Padus her own ill child shall bury, Volusius' annals;
In them a mackerel oft house him, a wrapper of ease.

Dear to my heart be a friend's unbulky memorial ever;
Cherish an Antimachus, weighty as empty, the mob.

XCVI

If to the silent dead aught sweet or tender ariseth,
Calvus, of our dim grief's common humanity born;
When to a love long cold some pensive pity recalls us,
When for a friend long lost wakes some unhappy regret;
Not so deeply, be sure, Quintilia's early departing
Grieves her, as in thy love dureth a plenary joy.

XCVIII

Asks some booby rebuke, some prolix prattler a judgment?
Vettius, all were said verily truer of you.
Tongue so noisome as yours, come chance, might surely on order
Bend to the mire, or lick dirt from a beggarly shoe.
Would you on all of us, all, bring, Vettius, utterly ruin?
Speak; not a doubt, 'twill come utterly, ruin on all.

XCIX

Dear one, a kiss I stole, while you did wanton a-playing,
Sweet ambrosia, love, never as honily sweet.

Dearly the deed I paid for; an hour's long misery waning
Ended, as I agoniz'd hung to the point of a cross,
Hoping vain purgation; alas! no potion of any
Tears could abate that fair angriness, youthful as you.

Hardly the sin was in act, your lips did many a falling
Drop dilute, which anon every finger away
Cleansed apace, lest still my mouth's infection abiding
Stain, like slaver abhorr'd breath'd from a foul fricatrice.

Add, that a booty to love in misery me to deliver
You did spare not, a fell worker of all agonies,
So that, again transmuted, a kiss ambrosia seeming
Sugary, turn'd to the strange harshness of harsh hellebore.

Then such dolorous end since your poor lover awaiteth,
Never a kiss will I venture, a theft any more.

C

Quintius, Aufilena; to Caelius, Aufilenus;
Lovers each, fair flower either of youths Veronese.
One to the brother bends, and one to the sister. A noble
Friendship, if e'er was true friendship, a rare brotherhood.

Ask me to which I lean? You, Caelius: yours a devotion
Single, a faith of tried quality, steady to me;
Into my inmost veins when love sank fiercely to burn them.
Mighty be your bright love, Caelius, happy be you!

CI

Borne o'er many a land, o'er many a level of ocean,
Here to the grave I come, brother, of holy repose,
Sadly the last poor gifts, death's simple duty, to bring thee;
Unto the silent dust vainly to murmur a cry.

Since thy form deep-shrouded an evil destiny taketh
From me, O hapless ghost, brother, O heavenly ta'en,
Yet this bounty the while, these gifts ancestral of usance
Homely, the sad slight store piety grants to the tomb;
Drench'd in a brother's tears, and weeping freshly, receive them;
Yea, take, brother, a long Ave, a timeless adieu.

CII

If to a friend sincere, Cornelius, e'er was a secret
Trusted, a friend whose soul steady to honour abides;
Me to the same brotherhood doubt not to be inly devoted,
Sworn upon oath, to the last secret, an Harpocrates.

CIII

Briefly, the sesterces all, give back, full quantity, Silo,
Then be a bully beyond exorability, you:
Else, if money be all, O cease so lewdly to practise
Bawd, yet bully beyond exorability, you.

CIV

What? should a lover adore, yet cruelly slander adoring?
I my lady, than eyes goodlier easily she?
Nay, I rail not at all. How rail, so blindly desiring?
Tappo alone dare brave all that is heinous, or you.

CV

Mentula toils, Pimplea, the Muses' mountain, ascending:
They with pitchforks hurl Mentula dizzily down.

CVI

Walks with a salesman a beauty, your eyes that beauty discerning?
Doubt not your eyes speak true; Sir, 'tis a beauty to sell.

CVII

If to delight man's wish, joy e'er unlook'd for, unhop'd for,
Falleth, a joy were such proper, a bliss to the soul.
Then 'tis a joy to the soul, like gold of Lydia precious,
Lesbia mine, that thou com'st to delight me again.
Com'st yet again long-hop'd, long-look'd for vainly, returnest
Freely to me. O day white with a luckier hue!
Lives there happier any than I, I only? a fairer
Destiny? Life so sweet know ye, or aught parallel?

CVIII

Loathly Cominius, if e'er this people's voice should arraign thee,

Hoary with all unclean infamy, worthy to die;
First should a tongue, I doubt not, of old so deadly to goodness,
Fall extruded, of each vulture a hungry regale;
Gouged be the carrion eyes some crow's black maw to replenish,
Stomach a dog's fierce teeth harry, a wolf the remains.

CIX

THINK you truly, belov'd, this bond of duty between us,
Lasteth, an ever-new jollity, ne'er to decease?
Grant it, Gods immortal, assure her promise in earnest;
Yea, be the lips sincere; yea, be the words from her heart.
So still rightly remain our lovers' charter, a life-long
Friendship in us, whose faith fades not away to the last.

CX

AUFILENA, the fair, if kind, is a favourite ever;
Asks she a price, then yields frankly? the price is her own.
You, that agreed to be kind, now vilely the treaty dishonour,
Give not at all, nor again take;—'tis a wrong to a wrong.

Not to deceive were noble, a chastity ne'er had assented,
Aufilena; but you—blindly to grasp at a gain,
Yet to withhold the effects,—'tis a greed more loathly than harlot's
Vileness, a wretch whose limbs ply to the lusts of a town.

CXI

ONE lord only to love, one, Aufilena, to live for,
Praise can a bride nowhere goodlier any betide;
Yet, when a niece with an uncle is even mother or even
Cousin—of all paramours this were as heinous as all.

CXII

NASO, if you show much, your company shows but a very
Little; a man you show, Naso, a woman in one.

CXIII

Pompey the first time consul, as yet Maecilia counted
Two paramours; reappears Pompey a consul again,
Two still, Cinna, remain; but grown, each unit an even
Thousand. Truly the stock's fruitful: adultery breeds.

CXIV

Rightly a lordly demesne makes Firman Mentula count for
Wealthy! the rich fine things, then the variety there!
Game in plenty to choose, fish, field, and meadow with hunting;
Only the waste exceeds strangely the quantity still.
Wealthy? perhaps I grant it; if all, wealth asks for, is absent.
Praise the demesne? no doubt; only be needy the man.

CXV

Acres thirty in all, good grass, own Mentula master;
Forty to plough; bare seas, arid or empty, the rest.
Poorly methinks might Croesus a man so sumptuous equal,
Counted in one rich park owner of all he can ask.
Grass or plough, big woods, much mountain, mighty morasses;
On to the farthest North, on to the boundary main.

Vastness is all that is here; yet Mentula reaches a vaster—
Man? not so; 'tis a vast mountainous ominous He.

CXVI

Oft with a studious heart, which hunted closely, requiring
Skill great Battiades' poesies haply to send,
Laying thus thy rage in rest, lest everlasting
Darts should reach me, to wound still an assailable head:

Barren now I see that labour of any requital,
Gellius; here all prayers fall to the ground, nor avail.
No; but a robe I carry, the barbs, thy folly, to muffle;
Mine strike sure; thy deep injury *they* shall atone.

THE
ELEGIES OF TIBULLUS

INCLUDING THE

POEMS OF SULPICIA

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE BY

JAMES GRAINGER, M. D.

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY LIFE OF TIBULLUS

BY THE SAME

INTRODUCTION

THE LIFE OF TIBULLUS

Albius Tibullus, the prince of elegiac poets, was born at Rome, B.C. 64, being descended from an equestrian branch of the Albian family. The ancient writers of Tibullus's life have favoured us with no particulars of his infancy, or his early education. However, as his father's condition was considerable, we can only suppose that nothing was omitted to render our poet a useful and elegant member of society.

In the year of Rome 705, the civil war broke out between Cæsar and Pompey. The army and corrupt part of the legislature followed Cæsar; while the majority of the senate and of the knights, with all those who dreaded a perpetual dictator, sided with Pompey; as the person from whom the republic had less danger to apprehend. Of this number was the father of Tibullus: and there is reason to suspect, that he either fell in the field, or was butchered by proscription; for we know that a considerable part of his estate was left a prey to the rapacious soldiery. These events probably determined our author's public attachments; but without these motive to revenge, it is not unlikely that Tibullus had, before this time, adopted the political opinions of his father.

At what actions in the civil war our young knight was present, as it was not prudent in him to mention in his poems, so historians do not inform us; but as principle and revenge equally conspired to rouse his courage (and courage he certainly possessed[1]), may we not safely infer, that Tibullus did not run away, like his friend Horace, from Philippi; at which battle he was present with his patron the illustrious Messala Corvinus?

But the fortune of Octavius prevailing over the better cause of Brutus and Cassius, Messala too (who was next in

[1] Tibull. lib. I. El. 8.

command to these patriot citizens) going over with his forces to the conqueror, Tibullus, although he paid the greatest regard to the sentiments of that excellent soldier and orator, yet determined to leave the army: for as he would not fight against the party which his friends had now espoused, so neither could he appear in arms against those whom his principle taught him to regard as the assertors of liberty. Besides, the bad success of the patriot party, and his own experience, had now inspired him with an abhorrence of the war: he therefore retired, A. U. C. 712, to his country seat at Pedum, there, by an honest industry, to raise his impaired fortune to its ancient splendor, while his hours of leisure were either devoted to philosophy or the muses.

But we are not to imagine that rural objects and study solely engaged our poet's attention; for being formed with a natural tenderness of disposition, he began to enlarge the sphere of his pleasures by conversing with the fair sex. The first object of his affection was probably Glycera; and we have Horace[1] on our side, when we add, that she at first gave him hopes of success: but though his person was elegant,[2] his fortune not contemptible, and his life was then in the prime, Glycera deserted him for a younger lover.[3] As he entertained a real affection for that lady, her infidelity gave him much uneasiness: he therefore endeavoured, by exerting his elegiac genius, to reclaim her. But his poems producing in Glycera no change to his advantage, his friend and old fellow-soldier, Horace, advised him to abate of his sorrow for her loss, and send her no more elegies.

None of these elegies having come down to our time, Lilio Gyraldi supposes that Nemesis and Glycera were the same:—but the poems which are inscribed to Nemesis[4] do not favour this disposition; and, indeed, it seems more likely that Tibullus was so piqued at the ill success of his first amour, that he destroyed all those elegies which it gave rise to.

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[1] Lib. I. Ode 33.
[2] Horat. lib. I. Ep. 4.
[3] Horat. lib. I. Ode 33.
[4] Lib. II.

Some time after this (A. U. C. 718) the fierce inhabitants of Pannonia rebelling and Messala being one of the generals appointed by Augustus to reduce them, that nobleman invited Tibullus to attend him in the expedition. As this service was not against the Pompeian party (to whom an amnesty was granted by the triumvirate, A. U. C. 715), and as he hoped in the hurry of a military life to find a remedy for his melancholy, he complied with his noble friend's request, and in every action behaved with his usual bravery.

In this manner did our poet subdue his passion for Glycera: but being by nature addicted to the love of the fair sex, at his return from the army he fixed his affections on Delia, which Apuleius tells us was an appellation given her by our poet, her real name being Plania.

It would seem, that some time after his attachment to Delia, Messala invited our poet to accompany him in some military expedition; but he was then too deeply enamoured of Delia to attend the call of honour. Tibullus, therefore, composed his first elegy; in which, as he prefers a country retirement with Delia, and a moderate income, to all the triumphs of war and allurements of fortune, so Corvinus could not well urge, with propriety, our poet's departure.

Messala having soon after obtained the consulship, Tibullus composed his panegyric. This poem is in heroic numbers, and though not destitute of poetical beauties, is inferior to his elegies: it seems rather an effusion of friendship than an effort of genius: it has, therefore, not been translated.

In the year of Rome 725, Messala being intrusted by Augustus Cæsar with an extraordinary command over Syria, insisted on Tibullus's accompanying him thither, to which our poet consented. This sacrifice to friendship was not, however, obtained without much reluctance. Tibullus, however, had not been long at sea, before he was taken so ill, that Messala was obliged to put him ashore, and leave him in Phæacia. In this island, so famous for the gardens of Alcinous, our poet composed the third elegy of the first book; which shows, that whatever effect this sickness had upon his constitution, it did not in the least impair his poetical talents.

From the sentiments of tenderness expressed in that beauti-

ful poem, it would not have been surprising, had Tibullus on his recovery returned to Italy: but he had too sincere a regard for his friend to desert him. He therefore, as soon as he was able to renew his voyage, hastened after Messala, and with that nobleman travelled through Cilicia, Syria, Egypt, and Greece; being then probably initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries at Athens.

What were the political consequences of this expedition, historians do not mention: but the consequences to Tibullus were highly disagreeable; for, if any stress in this point is to be laid on his elegies, there is reason to suspect that Delia married before his return.

This, doubtless, occasioned much uneasiness to, and rendered our poet the less unwilling to embrace another offer made him soon after by Messala, of going to Aquitaine; which province having revolted (A. U. C. 726) Augustus had intrusted that excellent officer with the important business of its reduction.

The Romans, says an elegant writer, fought with other nations for glory, but with the Gauls for liberty. This observation was at least verified at this time: for it was not till after many sharp actions, in which both the general and his soldiers distinguished themselves, that Messala completed the service he was sent upon. In all these battles our poet signalized his courage in so remarkable a manner, that the success of the expedition was, in no small degree, owing to him.[1] For which reason, he had military honour conferred on him.

The reduction of Aquitaine was so acceptable to the Emperor, that Messala had a triumph decreed him the year after: and as our poet had borne so distinguished a share in the war, it is not to be supposed but he was present at that superb solemnity; which, as an ancient inscription acquaints us, was celebrated on the seventh of the calends of October.

But his Gallic expedition not having banished Delia from his breast, he again paid his addresses to her: and, from some passages in the second and seventh elegies of the first book, it would seem that they were but too successful.

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[1] Lib. I. El. 8.

When a woman has once so far forgot herself, as to bestow improper favours on a lover, nothing is more natural than for that lover to suspect he is not the only favourite. Our poet is an instance of the truth of this observation; for to such a height did his ungenerous suspicions of Delia arise (notwithstanding all her protestations of innocence), that he made her husband acquainted with his intrigue.[1] Whether Delia was innocent or not, she could never forgive this discovery; or had she been willing to forget the past, we cannot suppose that her husband would ever admit Tibullus again into his house.

Such, then, was the extraordinary conclusion of our poet's intimacy with Delia; and therefore the poem which furnished these particulars is justly made the last of the poems inscribed to that beauty.

Although the elegies of Tibullus warrant, in some sort, these surmises, yet it ought to be considered, that poets write from imagination more frequently than from reality, because ideal subjects afford greater scope to their faculties, than occurrences in common life:—and indeed, if what Ovid tells us may be depended on, Delia was again enamoured with our poet at the time of his decease, when probably her husband was dead.

Some time elapsed, before Tibullus entered into any new engagements. In this interval, he composed his famous elegy on Messala's Birthday, the ninth and the following elegies of the first book, with the first and second of the second book; endeavouring to forget his disasters, by dividing his time between his country-seat and Rome; but chiefly by conversing, more than ever, with the learned and polite: of these the most eminent among his acquaintances were Messala, Valgius, Macer, and Horace.

Messala was now in the height of his reputation: in eloquence and military knowledge, he was excelled by none of his contemporaries; and yet the goodness of his heart surpassed his abilities. His house was the rendezvous of the learned; and his patronage, as an admirable poet [Dr. Young] expresses it, was

[1] Lib. 1. El. 7.

The surest passport to the gates of fame.

Happy in the approbation of all parties, Messala's siding with Augustus, after the defeat at Philippi, did not lose him the esteem of his old friends; and his interesting himself in their behalf, to the honour of that emperor, made him not the less beloved by Augustus.

J. Valgius Rufus was eminent, not only for heroic poetry, but also for his elegies, especially those on the death of his son Mystes. He also wrote some excellent epigrams. But all his poems are now lost. As Tibullus thought him the best poet next to Homer, posterity has suffered much in their loss.

Of Macer, all that is known is mentioned in the notes to the sixth Elegy of the second book.

But although Tibullus himself informs us of his acquaintance with these eminent scholars; yet should we not have known of the friendship which Horace and he entertained for one another, had it not been for Horace, who probably about this time sent our poet an epistle. [Lib. i. Ep. 4.]

When such were the friends of Tibullus, and his poetical abilities had long since obtained him universal applause, he could have found no difficulty in getting admission to the learned court of Augustus. "How then (ask the commentators) has it come to pass, that he never once mentions either that emperor or Mæcenas, both whom his brother poets celebrated with such a lavishness of praise? And yet (add they) there are many parts of his writings where those patrons of genius might have been introduced with uncommon propriety."

True to the principles of the republic, and a real friend to the liberties of the people, Tibullus never could prevail upon himself to flatter those, whatever affection they expressed for the muses, whom his principles taught him to detest as the enslavers of his country.

This, as Pope emphatically expresses it, "kept him sacred from the great," who, doubtless, perceived with secret displeasure (for Augustus and Mæcenas well knew the importance of having the poets on their side) that no loss of fortune, and no allurement of ambition, could induce Tibullus

to join in the general chorus of their praise. Although both the emperor and his favourite must in their hearts have applauded our poet's integrity; yet that mental applause, in all probability, would not have secured Tibullus from the effects of their displeasure, had it not been for the interest which he had with Messala.

Soon after this, Tibullus fell in love with Neæra. It is true, that the Elegies he wrote to Neæra, in every edition of our poet, follow those in which he celebrates Nemesis: yet, as Ovid (who could not well be mistaken in what related to one whom he regarded so much as Tibullus) says that Nemesis was his last mistress, and as it is probable that the fifth Elegy of the second book (our poet being then certainly very fond of Nemesis) was written between the years 732 and 734, when Augustus wintered in Samos, (that is, a short time before our poet's death) we suppose that Neæra was the third object of his affections.

Fabricius conjectures, from her name, that she was a woman of the town; Neæra, in the declension of the Roman empire, being a synonimous term for a courtezan: but Fabricius should have considered that Tibullus wrote in the Augustan age. Besides, it appears from Homer,[1] from a Valerius Flaccus, and from an old marble statue preserved by Pignorius, that women of the first rank, and most unsuspected modesty, were called by that name. Without, however, these authorities, Tibullus himself screens this favourite from the imputation of libertinism, by bestowing on her the epithet *casta*.[2] He also characterizes her parents as people of virtue and fortune.

It appears from the second and third Elegy of the third book, that Neæra, after a long courtship, having consented to marry Tibullus, was somehow or other forced away from him. This gave our poet an uncommon concern; which was redoubled, when he discovered, that she herself had not only been accessory to her being carried off, but meant also to marry his rival.

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[1] Odyss. lib. XII. ver. 133.

[2] Lib. III. El. 4.

Tibullus, who had hitherto been unsuccessful in his addresses to the fair, was not more fortunate in his last mistress; for, if Nemesis (for so was she called) possessed beauties of mind and person equal to those of Delia and Neæra, her extreme avarice obscured them all. And though Martial founds Tibullus's chief claim to poetical reputation on the Elegies he addressed to that lady, we have our poet's authority for asserting, that they produced no effect upon her.

Whether Nemesis ever abated of her rigour to Tibullus, his elegies do not inform us. It is indeed probable she did, especially since Ovid represents her as sincerely grieved at Tibullus's death; which, according to Marsus, a contemporary poet, happened soon after that of Virgil:

> Thee! young Tibullus, to the' Elysian plain
> Death bid accompany great Maro's shade;
> Determin'd that no poet should remain,
> Or to sing wars, or weep the cruel maid.

For Tibullus died either A. U. C. 735, the year of Virgil's death, or the year after, in the forty-fourth or forty-fifth year of his age.

Nor was Marsus the only poet who celebrated this melancholy event. Ovid, who had no less friendship than admiration for Tibullus, has immortalized both himself and his friend in the following beautiful elegy; which, containing some further particulars relating to our poet, will make a proper conclusion to this life, which, from the scantiness as well as the little authority of many of the materials, the author is sorry he cannot render more complete.

ON TIBULLUS

By Ovid

> If Thetis, if the blushing queen of morn,
> If mighty goddesses could taste of woe
> For mortal sons; come, Elegy forlorn!
> Come, weeping dame! and bid thy tresses flow:

Thou bear'st, soft mistress of the tearful eye,
From grief thy name; now name, alas, too just!
For see thy favourite bard, thy glory, lie
Stretch'd on yon funeral pile; ah! lifeless dust!

See Venus' son, his torch extinguish'd brings,
His quiver all revers'd, and broke his bow;
See pensive how he droops his flagging wings,
And strikes his bared bosom many a blow:

Loose and neglected, scatter'd o'er his neck,
His golden locks drink many a falling tear:
What piteous sobs, as if his heart would break,
Shake his swoln cheek? Ah, sorrow too severe!

Thus, fair Iulus! for thy godlike sire,
'Tis said, he weeping from thy roof withdrew:
Nor deeper mourn'd the queen of soft desire,
When the grim boar her lov'd Adonis slew.

And yet, we bards are fondly call'd divine,
Are sacred held, the gods' peculiar care:
There are that deem us of the ethereal line,
That something of the deity we share.

But what can death's abhorred stroke withstand!
Say, what so sacred he will not profane?
On all the monster lays his dusky hand,
And poets are immortal deem'd in vain?

Thee, Orpheus, what avail'd thy heavenly sire?
Thy mother-muse, and beast-enchanging song?
The god for Linus swept his mournful lyre,
And with a father's woes the forests rung.

Great Homer see, from whose eternal spring
Pierian draughts the poet-train derive;
Not he could 'scape the fell remorseless king,[1]
His lays alone the greedy flames survive.

[1] Pluto.

Still live the work of ages, Ilion's fame,
And the slow web by nightly craft unwove:
So Nemesis shall live, and Delia's name;
This his first passion, that his recent love.

Now what avails, ye fair! each holy rite,
Each painful service for your lover paid?
Recluse and lonely that you pass'd the night?
Or sought the' Egyptian cymbal's fruitless aid?

When partial fate thus tears the good away,
(Forgive, ye just! th' involuntary thought)
I'm led to doubt of Jove's eternal sway,
And fear that gods and heaven are words of nought.

Live pious, you must die: religion prize,
Death to the tomb will drag you from the fane:
Confide in verse; lo! where Tibullus lies!
His all the little urn will now contain!

Thee, sacred bard! could then funereal fires
Snatch from us? on thy bosom durst they feed?
Not fanes were safe, not Jove's refulgent spires,[1]
From flames that ventur'd on this impious deed.

The beauteous queen that reigns in Eryx' towers,
From the sad sight averts her mournful face;
There are, that tell of soft and pearly showers
Which down her lovely cheeks their courses trace.

Yet better thus, than on Phæacia's strand,
Unknown, unpitied, and unseen to die:
His closing eyes here felt a mother's hand,
Her tender hands each honour'd rite supply.

His parting shade here found a sister's care,
Who sad attends, with tresses loose and torn:
The fair he lov'd his dying kisses share,
Nor quit the pyre afflicted and forlorn.

[1] The Capitol.

"Farewell, dear youth! (thus Delia parting cried)
How bless'd the time, when I inspir'd the lay?
You liv'd, were happy; every care defied,
While I possess'd your heart, untaught to stray."

To whom thus Nemesis, in scornful mood,
"Mine was the loss, then why art thou distress'd?
Me, only me, with parting life he view'd;
My hand alone with dying ardor press'd." [1]

And yet, if ought beyond this mouldering clay
But empty name and shadowy form remain,
Thou liv'st, dear youth! for ever young and gay;
For ever bless'd, shalt range the' Elysian plain.

And thou, Catullus! learned, gallant mind,
(Fast by thy side thy Calvus will attend)
With ivy wreaths thy youthful temples twin'd,
Shalt spring to hail the' arrival of thy friend.
"Oh, may I view thee with life's parting ray,
And thy dear hand with dying ardor press!"

And Gallus, too profuse of life and blood,
If no sad breach of friendship's law deprive,
This band immortal of the bless'd and good,
Thy shade shall join, if shades at all survive.

Thou polish'd bard! thy loss though here we mourn,
Hast swell'd the sacred number of the bless'd;
Safe rest thy gentle bones within their urn!
Nor heavy press the earth upon thy breast!

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[1] Alluding ironically to the following passage in the first Elegy, which Tibullus there applies to Delia.

THE ELEGIES OF TIBULLUS

BOOK I

ELEGY I

The glittering ore let others vainly heap,
O'er fertile vales extend the enclosing mound;
With dread of neighbouring foes forsake their sleep,
And start aghast at every trumpet's sound.

Me humbler scenes delight, and calmer days;
A tranquil life fair poverty secure!
Then boast, my heart, a small but cheerful blaze,
And riches grasp who will, let me be poor.

Nor yet be, Hope, a stranger to my door,
But o'er my roof, bright goddess, still preside!
With many a bounteous autumn heap my floor,
And swell my vats with must, a purple tide.

My tender vines I'll plant with early care,
And choicest apples, with a skilful hand;
Nor blush, a rustic, oft to guide the share,
Or goad the tardy ox along the land.

Let me a simple swain, with honest pride,
If chance a lambkin from its dam should roam,
Or sportful kid, the little wanderer chide,
And in my bosom bear exulting home.

Here Pales[1] I bedew with milky show'rs,
Lustrations yearly for my shepherd pay,
Revere each antique stone bedeck'd with flow'rs,
That bound the field, or points the doubtful way.[2]

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[1] Goddess of shepherds. Her festival [Palilia] was celebrated on the eleventh or twelfth calends of May, the day that Rome was founded.

[2] The Romans revered boundary and guide stones.

My grateful fruits, the earliest of the year,
Before the rural god[1] shall duly wait;
From Ceres' gifts I'll cull each browner ear,
And hang a wheaten wreath before her gate.

The ruddy god[2] shall save my fruit from stealth,
And far away each little plunderer scare:
And you, the guardians once of ampler wealth,
My household gods,[3] shall still my offerings share.

My numerous herds, that wanton'd o'er the mead,
The choicest fatling then could richly yield;
Now scarce I spare a little lamb to bleed,
A mighty victim for my scanty field:

And yet a lamb shall bleed, while rang'd around,
The village youths shall stand in order meet;
With rustic hymns, ye gods, your praise resound,
And future crops and future wines entreat.

Then come, ye powers, nor scorn my frugal board,
Nor yet the gifts clean earthen bowls convey;
With these the first of men the gods ador'd,
And form'd their simple shape of ductile clay.

My little flock, ye wolves, ye robbers, spare;
Too mean a plunder to deserve your toil;
For wealthier herds the nightly theft prepare,
There seek a nobler prey and richer spoil.

For treasur'd wealth, nor stores of golden wheat,
The hoard of frugal sires, I vainly call;
A little farm be mine, a cottage neat,
And wonted couch where balmy sleep may fall.

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[1] Vertumnus.

[2] Priapus, statues of whom were set up in gardens to warn marauders away.

[3] The Lares.

What joy to hear the tempest howl in vain,
And clasp a fearful mistress to my breast:
Or lull'd to slumber by the beating rain,
Secure and happy, sink at last to rest.

These joys be mine!—O grant me only these,
And give to others bags of shining gold,
Whose steely hearts can brave the boisterous seas,
The storm wide-wasting, or the stiffening cold.

Content with little, I would rather stay
Than spend long months amid the watery waste;
In cooling shades elude the scorching ray,
Beside some fountain's gliding waters plac'd.

O perish rather all that's rich and rare,
The diamond quarry, and the golden vein,
Than that my absence cost one precious tear,
Or give some gentle maid a moment's pain.

With glittering spoils, Messala,[1] gild thy dome,
Be thine the noble task to lead the brave;
A lovely foe me captive holds at home,
Chain'd to her scornful gate, a watchful slave.

Inglorious post! and yet I heed not fame:
The' applause of crowds for Delia I'd resign:
To live with thee I'd bear the coward's name,
Nor 'midst the scorn of nations once repine.

With thee to live, I'd mock the ploughman's toil,
Or on some lonely mountain tend my sheep;
At night I'd lay me on the flinty soil,
And happy 'midst thy dear embraces sleep.

What drooping lover heeds the Tyrian bed,
While the long night is pass'd with many a sigh:
Nor softest down with richest carpets spread,
Nor whispering rills can close the weeping eye.

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[1] The "Mæcenas" of Tibullus. See introduction.

Of threefold iron were his rugged frame,
Who when he might thy yielding heart obtain,
Could yet attend the calls of empty fame,
Or follow arms in quest of sordid gain.

Unenvied let him drive the vanquish'd host,
Through captive lands his conquering armies lead;
Unenvied wear the robe with gold emboss'd,
And guide with solemn state his foaming steed.

Oh may I view thee with life's parting ray,
And thy dear hand with dying ardor press:
Sure thou wilt weep—and on thy lover's clay,
With breaking heart, print many a tender kiss:

Sure thou wilt weep—and woes unutter'd feel,
When on the pile thou seest thy lover laid!
For well I know, nor flint, nor ruthless steel,
Can arm the breast of such a gentle maid.

From the sad pomp, what youth, what pitying fair,
Returning slow, can tender tears refrain?
O Delia, spare thy cheeks, thy tresses spare,
Nor give my lingering shade a world of pain.

But now, while smiling hours the fates bestow,
Let love, dear maid, our gentle hearts unite!
Soon death will come and strike the fatal blow,
Unseen his head, and veil'd in shades of night.

Soon creeping age will bow the lover's frame,
And tear the myrtle-chaplet from his brow:
With hoary locks ill suits the youthful flame,
The soft persuasion, or the ardent vow.

Now the fair queen of gay desire is ours,
And lends our follies an indulgent smile:
'Tis lavish youth's to' enjoy the frolic hours,
The wanton revel and the midnight broil.

Your chief, my friends, and fellow-soldier, I
To these light wars will lead you boldly on:
For hence, ye trumpets sound, and banners fly,
To those who covet wounds, and fame begone:

And bear them fame and wounds, and riches bear;
There are that fame and wounds and riches prize:
For me, while I possess one plenteous year,
I'll wealth and meagre want alike despise.

ELEGY II

With wine, more wine, my recent pains deceive,
Till creeping slumber send a soft reprieve:
Asleep, take heed no whisper stirs the air,
For wak'd, my boy, I wake to heartfelt care.
Now is my Delia watch'd by ruthless spies,
And the gate, bolted, all access denies.
Relentless gate; may storms of wind and rain,
With mingled violence avenge my pain!
May forky thunders, hurl'd by Jove's red hand,
Burst every bolt, and shatter every band!
Ah, no! rage turns my brain; the curse recal;
On me, devoted, let the thunder fall!
Then recollect my many wreaths of yore,
How oft you've seen me weep, insensate door!
No longer then our interview delay,
And, as you open, let no noise betray.
In vain I plead: dare then my Delia rise!
Love aids the dauntless, and will blind your spies!
Those who the godhead's soft behests obey,
Steal from the pillows unobserv'd away;
On tiptoe traverse unobserv'd the floor;
The key turn noiseless, and unfold the door:
In vain the jealous each precaution take,
Their speaking fingers assignations make.
Nor will the god impart to all his aid;
Love hates the fearful, hates the lazy maid;
But through sly windings, and unpractis'd ways,

His bold night-errants to their wish conveys:
For those whom he with expectation fires,
No ambush frightens, and no labour tires;
Sacred the dangers of the dark they dare,
No robbers stop them, and no bravos scare.
Though wintry tempests howl, by love secure,
The howling tempest I with ease endure:
No watching hurts me, if my Delia smile,
Soft turn the gate, and beckon me the while.
She's mine. Be blind, ye ramblers of the night,
Lest angry Venus snatch your guilty sight:
The goddess bids her votaries' joys to be
From every casual interruption free:
With prying steps alarm us not, retire;
Nor glare your torches, nor our names inquire:
Or if ye know, deny, by Heaven above,
Nor dare divulge the privacies of love.
From blood and seas vindictive Venus sprung,
And sure destruction waits the blabbing tongue!
Nay, should they prate, you, Delia, need not fear;
Your lord (a sorceress swore) should give no ear!
By potent spells she cleaves the sacred ground,
And shuddering spectres wildly roam around!
I've seen her tear the planets from the sky;
Seen lightning backward at her bidding fly.
She calls! from blazing pyres the corse descends,
And, re-enliven'd, clasps his wondering friends!
The fiends she gathers with a magic yell,
Then, with aspersions, frights them back to hell!
She wills,—glad summer gilds the frozen pole!
She wills,—in summer wintry tempests roll!
She knows ('tis true) Medea's awful spell!
She knows to vanquish the fierce guards of hell!
To me she gave a charm for lovers meet,
("Spit thrice, my fair, and thrice the charm repeat.")
Us, in soft dalliance should your lord surprise;
By this impos'd on, he'd renounce his eyes!
But bless no rival, or the' affair is known;
This incantation me befriends alone.

Nor stopp'd she here; but swore, if I'd agree,
By charms or herbs to set thy lover free.
With dire lustrations she began the rite!
(Serenely shone the planet of the night)
The magic gods she call'd with hellish sound,
A sable sacrifice distain'd the ground—
I stopp'd the spell: I must not, cannot part;
I begg'd her aid to gain a mutual heart.

ELEGY III

While you, Messala, plough the' Ægean sea,
O sometimes kindly deign to think of me:
Me, hapless me, Phæacian shores detain,
Unknown, unpitied, and oppress'd with pain.
Yet spare me, Death! ah, spare me and retire:
No weeping mother's here to light my pyre;
Here is no sister, with a sister's woe,
Rich Syrian odours on the pile to throw:
But chief, my soul's soft partner is not here,
Her locks to loose, and sorrow o'er my bier.
What though fair Delia my return implor'd,
Each fane frequented, and each god ador'd:
What though they bade me every peril brave;
And fortune thrice auspicious omens gave:
All could not dry my tender Delia's tears,
Suppress her sighs, or calm her anxious fears;
E'en as I strove to minister relief,
Unconscious tears proclaim'd my heartfelt grief:
Urg'd still to go, a thousand shifts I made,
Birds now, now festivals my voyage staid:
Or, if I struck my foot against the door,
Straight I return'd, and wisdom was no more.
Forbid by Cupid, let no swain depart,
Cupid is vengeful, and will wring his heart.
What do your offerings now, my fair, avail?
Your Isis heeds not, and your cymbals fail!
What, though array'd in sacred robes you stood,
Fled man's embrace and sought the purest flood?

While this I write, I sensibly decay,
"Assist me, Isis, drive my pains away:
That you can every mortal ill remove,
The numerous tablets in your temple prove:
So shall my Delia, veil'd in votive white,
Before your threshold sit for many a night;
And twice a day her tresses all unbound,
Amid your votaries fam'd, your praises sound:
Safe to my household gods may I return,
And incense monthly on their altars burn."
How bless'd man liv'd in Saturn's golden days,
Ere distant climes were join'd by lengthen'd ways,
Secure the pine upon the mountain grew,
Nor yet o'er billows in the ocean flew;
Then every clime a wild abundance bore;
And man liv'd happy on his natal shore.
For then no steed to feel the bit was broke,
Then had no steer submitted to the yoke;
No house had gates, (bless'd times!) and, in the grounds
No scanty landmarks parcell'd out the bounds:
From every oak redundant honey ran,
And ewes spontaneous bore their milk to man:
No deathful arms were forg'd, no war was wag'd,
No rapine plunder'd, no ambition rag'd.
How chang'd, alas!—Now cruel Jove commands;
Gold fires the soul, and falchions arm our hands:
Each day, the main unnumber'd lives destroys;
And slaughter, daily, o'er her myriads joys.
Yet spare me, Jove; I ne'er disown'd thy sway,
I ne'er was perjur'd; spare me, Jove, I pray.
But, if the sisters have pronounc'd my doom,
Inscrib'd be these upon my humble tomb:
"Lo! here inurn'd a youthful poet lies,
Far from his Delia, and his native skies!
Far from the lov'd Messala, whom to please
Tibullus follow'd over land and seas."
Then Love my ghost (for Love I still obey'd)
Will grateful usher to the' Elysian shade:
There joy and ceaseless revelry prevail;

There soothing music floats on every gale;
There painted warblers hop from spray to spray,
And, wildly pleasing, swell the general lay:
There every hedge, untaught, with cassia blooms,
And scents the ambient air with rich perfumes:
There every mead a various plenty yields,
There lavish Flora paints the purple fields:
With ceaseless light a brighter Phœbus glows,
No sickness tortures, and no ocean flows;
But youths associate with the gentle fair,
And stung with pleasure, to the shade repair:
With them Love wanders wheresoe'er they stray,
Provokes to rapture, and inflames the play:
But chief, the constant few, by death betray'd,
Reign crown'd with myrtle, monarchs of the shade.
Not so the wicked; far they drag their chains,
By black lakes sever'd from the blissful plains;
Those should they pass, impassable the gate
Where Cerberus howls, grim sentinel of fate!
There snake-hair'd fiends with whips patrole around,
Rack'd anguish bellows, and the deeds resound:
There he, who dar'd to tempt the queen of heaven,
Upon an ever-turning wheel is driven:
The Danaids there still strive huge casks to fill,
But strive in vain; the casks elude their skill:
There Pelops' sire, to quench his thirsty fires,
Still tries the flood, and still the flood retires:
There vultures tear the bow'ls, and drink the gore,
Of Tityus, stretch'd enormous on the shore.
Dread Love! as vast as endless be their pain
Who tempt my fair, or wish a long campaign.
O let no rival your affections share,
Long as this bosom beats, my lovely fair!
Still on you let your prudent nurse attend;
She'll guard your honour, she's our common friend.
Her tales of love your sorrowings will allay,
And, in my absence, make my Delia gay:
Let her o'er all your virgin train preside,
She'll praise the' industrious, and the lazy chide.

But see! on all enfeebling languors creep;
Their distaffs drop, they yawn, they nod, they sleep.
Then, if the destinies propitious prove,
Then will I rush, all passion, on my love:
My wish'd return no messenger shall tell,
I'll seem, my fair, as if from heaven I fell.
A soft confusion flushes all your charms,
Your graceful déshabille my bosom warms,
You, Delia, fly and clasp me in your arms.
For this surprise, ye powers of love, I pray;
Post on, Aurora, bring the rosy day.

ELEGY IV[1]

Poet

So round, my god, may shady coverings bend,
No sunbeams scorch thy face, no snows offend!
Whence are the fair so proud to win thy heart,
Yet rude thy beard, and guiltless thou of art?
Naked thou stand'st, expos'd to wintry snows!
Naked thou stand'st when burning Sirius glows?
Thus I—and thus the garden-power replied,
A crooked sickle glittering by his side.

Priapus

Take no repulse—at first, what though they fly!
O'ercome at last, reluctance will comply.
The vine in time ripen'd clusters bears,
And circling time brings back the rolling spheres:
In time soft rains through marble sap their way,
And time taught man to tame fierce beasts of prey,

[1] Those who understand the original, need not to be told the reasons which obliged the translator to alter and omit many passages of this Elegy, which, with some few others of the same stamp, were probably those parts of Tibullus which made the pious Anthony Possevin apply to heaven in prayer, to preserve him from temptation, whenever he purposed to read our poet.

Nor, aw'd by conscience, meanly dread to swear;
Love-oaths, unratified, wild tempests bear!
Banish then scruples, if you'd gain a heart;
Swear, swear by Pallas' locks, Diana's dart;
By all that's most rever'd—if they require:
(Oaths bind not eager love, thank heaven's good sire!)
Nor be too slow; your slowness you'll deplore;
Time posts; and, oh! youth's raptures soon are o'er:
Now forests bloom, and purple earth looks gay;
Bleak winter blows, and all her charms decay:
How soon the steed to age's stiffness yields,
So late a victor in the Olympic fields!
I've seen the aged oft lament their fate,
That, senseless, they had learn'd to live too late.
Ye partial gods, and can the snake renew
His youthful vigour and his burnish'd hue?
But youth and beauty pass'd; is art in vain
To bring the coy deserters back again?

POET

Jove gives alone the powers of wit and wine,
In youth immortal, spite of years to shine.

PRIAPUS

Yield prompt compliance to the maid's desires;
A prompt compliance fans the lover's fires·
Go pleas'd where'er she goes, though long the way,
Though the fierce dog-star dart his sultry ray;
Though painted Iris gird the bluish sky,
And sure portends that rattling storms are nigh:
Or, if the fair-one pant for silvan fame,
Gay drag the meshes, and provoke the game:
Nay, should she choose to risk the driving gale;
Or steer, or row or agile hand the sail:
No toil, though weak, though fearful, thou forbear:
No toils should tire you, and no dangers scare:
Occasion smiles, then snatch an ardent kiss;

The coy may struggle, but will grant the bliss:
The bliss obtain'd, the fictious struggle pass'd;
Unbid, they'll clasp you in their arms at last.

POET

Alas! in such degenerate days as these,
No more love's gentle wiles the beauteous please!
If poor, all gentle stratagems are vain:
The fair-ones languish now alone for gain.
Oh may dishonour be the wretch's share,
Who first with hateful gold seduc'd the fair!

PRIAPUS

Ye charming dames, prefer the tuneful quire,
Nor meanly barter heavenly charms for hire.
What cannot song? The purple locks that glow'd
On Nissus' head, harmonious song bestow'd!
What cannot strains? By tuneful strains alone
Fair ivory, Pelops, on thy shoulder shone!
While stars with nightly radiance gild the pole,
Earth boasts her oaks, or mighty waters roll,
The fair whose beauty poets deign to praise,
Shall bloom uninjur'd in poetic lays:
While she who hears not when the muses call,
But flies their favourites, gold's inglorious thrall,
Shall prove (believe the bard or soon or late,)
A dread example of avenging fate!
Soft flattering songs the Cyprian queen approves;
And aids the suppliant swain with all her loves.

POET

The god, no novice in the intriguing trade,
This answer, Titius,[1] to my question made:
But caution bids you fly the insidious fair,

[1] Titius Septimius, a man no less eminent for his friendship with Horace, than for his real poetical abilites.

And paints the perils of their eyes and air;
Nor these alone devoted man subdue,
Devoted man their slightest actions woo.
Be cautious those who list—but ye who know
Desire's hot fever, and contempt's chill woe;
Me grateful praise—contempt shall pain no more;
But wish meet wish, instructed by my lore.
By various means, while others seek for fame.
Scorn'd love to counsel be my noblest aim.
Wide stands my gate for all—I rapt foresee
The time when I Love's oracle shall be!
When round my seat shall press the' enamour'd throng,
Attend my motions and applaud my song.
Alas! my hopes are fled, my wiles are vain;
The fair I doat on treats me with disdain:
Yet spare me, charmer, your disdain betrays
To witty laughter my too boastful lays.

ELEGY V

Of late I boasted I could happy be,
Resume the man, and not my Delia see!
And boasts of manhood and of bliss are vain;
Back to my bondage I return again:
And like a top am whirl'd, which boys, for sport,
Lash on the pavement of a level court.
What can atone, my fair, for crimes like these?
I'll bear with patience, use me as you please!
Yet, by Love's shafts, and by your braided hair,
By all the joys we stole, your suppliant spare.
When sickness dimm'd of late your radiant eyes,
My restless, fond petitions won the skies.
Thrice I with sulphur purified you round,
And thrice the rite with songs the' enchantress bound:
The cake, by me thrice sprinkled, put to flight
The death-denouncing phantoms of the night:
And I nine times, in linen garbs array'd,
In silent night, nine times to Trivia[1] pray'd.

[1] Diana.

What did I not? Yet what reward have I?
You love another, your preserver fly!
He tastes the sweet effects of all my cares,
My fond lustrations, and my solemn prayers.
Are these the joys my madding fancy drew,
If young-eyed Health restor'd your rosy hue?
I fondly thought, sweet maid; oh, though in vain!
With you to live a blithesome village-swain.
When yellow Ceres asks the reaper's hand,
"Delia (said I) will guard the reaper's band;
Delia will keep, when hinds unload the vine,
The choicest grapes for me, the richest wine:
My flocks she'll count, and oft will sweetly deign
To clasp some prattler of my menial train:
With pious care will load each rural shrine,
For ripen'd crops a golden sheaf assign,
Cates for my fold, rich clusters for my vine:
No, no domestic care shall touch my soul;
You, Delia, reign despotic o'er the whole!
And will Messala fly from pomp of state,
And deign to enter at my lowly gate?
The choicest fruitage that my trees afford,
Delia will cull herself, to deck the board;
And wondering, such transcendent worth to see,
The fruit present, thy blushing handmaid she.
Such were the fond chimeras of my brain,
Which now the winds have wafted o'er the main.
O power of love! whom still my soul obey'd,
What has my tongue against thy mother said?
Guiltless of ill, unmark'd with incest's stain,
I stole no garland from her holy fane:
For crimes like these I'd abject crawl the ground,
Kiss her dread threshold, and my forehead wound.
But ye who, falsely wise, deride my pains,
Beware; your hour approaches—Love has chains.
I've known the young, who ridicul'd his rage,
Love's humblest vassals, when oppress'd with age:
Each art I've known them try, to win the fair,
Smooth their hoarse voice, and dress their scanty hair;

I've known them, in the street, her maid detain,
And weeping, beg her to assist their pain.
At such preposterous love each schoolboy sneers,
Shuns, as an omen, or pursues with fleers.
Why do you crush your slave, fair queen of joy?
Destroying me, your harvest you destroy!

ELEGY VI

With wine I strove to soothe my love-sick soul,
But vengeful Cupid dash'd with tears the bowl:
All mad with rage, to kinder nymphs I flew;
But vigour fled me, when I thought on you.
Balk'd of the rapture, from my arms they run,
Swear I'm devoted, and my converse shun!
By what dire witchcraft am I thus betray'd?
Your face and hair unnerve me, matchless maid!
Not more celestial look'd the sea-born fair,
Receiv'd by Peleus from her pearly chair.
A rich admirer his addresses paid,
And brib'd my mistress by a beldam's aid.
From you my ruin, curs'd procuress, rose;
What imprecations shall avenge my woes?
May heaven in pity to my sufferings, shed
Its keenest mischief on your plotting head!
The ghosts of those you robb'd of love's delight,
In horrid visions haunt your irksome night!
And, on the chimney, may the boding owl
Your rest disturb, and terrify your soul!
By famine stung, to churchyards may you run:
There feast on offals, hungry wolves would shun!
Or howling frantic, in a tatter'd gown,
Fierce mastiffs bate you through each crowded town!
'Tis done! a lover's curse the gods approve;
But keenest vengeance fires the queen of love.
Leave then, my fair, the crafty venal jade:
What passion yields not, when such foes invade?
Your hearts, ye fair, does modest merit claim?
Though small his fortunes, feed his gentle flame:

For, genuine love's soft raptures would you know?
These raptures merit can alone bestow:
The sons of opulence are folly's care,
But want's rough child is sense, and honour's heir.
In vain we sing—the gate still bolted stands:
Come, vengeance! let us burst its sullen bands.
Learn, happy rival, by my wrongs to know
Your fate since fortune governs all below.

ELEGY VII

Love still invites me with a smiling eye!
Beneath his smiles, what pains and anguish lie?
Yet since the gods, dread power, must yield to thee:
What laurels canst thou gain from conquering me?
Me Delia lov'd; but by thy subtle wiles,
The fair, in secret, on another smiles:
That my suspicion's false, 'tis true, she swears;
And backs her imprecations with her tears.
False fair! your oaths and syren tears refrain;
Your syren tears and oaths no credit gain;
For when your lord suspected me of yore,
As much you wept, as many oaths you swore.
Yet wherefore blame I Love? the blame is mine;
I, wretched I, first taught her to design!
I first instructed her, her spies to foil!
Back on myself my wanton arts recoil:
Herbs of rare energy my skill supplied,
All marks of too fond gallantry to hide!
More artful now, alone the wanton lies;
And new pretexts her cozening brains devise.
Uncautious lord of a too cunning spouse!
Admittance grant me, she shall keep her vows!
Be warn'd, my friend, observe her when her tongue
Commends in wanton phrase the gay-dress'd young;
Oh! let her not her heaving bosom bare,
Expos'd to every fop's immodest stare.
When leaning on the board, with flowing wine;
She seems to draw some inconsiderate line;

Take heed, take heed (I know the warning true)
These random lines assign an interview.
Nor let your wife to fanes so frequent roam,
A modest wife's best temple is at home;
But if your prohibitions are all vain,
Give me the hint, I'll dodge her to the fane:
What though the goddess snatch my curious sight,
I'll bring her wanton privacies to light.
Some gem she wore I'd oft pretend to view,
But squeez'd her fingers, unperceiv'd of you:
Oft with full racy bowls I seal'd your eyes,
Water my beverage, and obtain'd the prize.
Yet since I tell, forgive the pranks I play'd,
Love prompted all, and Love must be obey'd!
Nay, 'twas at me (be now the truth avow'd)
Your watchful mastiff us'd to bark so loud;
But now some other, with insidious wait,
Intent observes each creaking of your gate,
At which, whoever of the house appears,
Passing, the mien of quick dispatch he wears;
But comes again, the minute they remove,
And coughs,—sure signal of impatient love!
What boots, though marriage gave a wife so fair,
If careless you, or she eludes your care?
While men are artful, and your wife can feign,
Vain are your brazen-bolts, your mastiffs vain.
Cold to the raptures of the genial bed,
She lays the fault upon an aching head:
'Tis false; the wanton for some other sighs;
From this her coolness, this, her aches arise.
Then, then be warn'd, intrust her to my care;
Whips, chains I laugh at, if you grant my prayer.
"Hence from my ward, ye sparkish essenc'd beaux;
Illegal love oft springs from essenc'd clothes."
Where'er she walks, not distant I'll attend;
And guard your honour from the casual friend!
"Off, gallants, off: for so the gods ordain;
So, the dread priestess in unerring strain!"
(When holy fury fires the frantic dame,

She mocks all torture,[1] and exults in flame;
Her snow-white arms and heaving breast she tears,
And with the gushing gore Bellona smears;
Deep in her side she plants the glittering sword;
And the dread goddess prompts each fateful word.)
"Ye youths, beware; nor touch whom Cupid guards;
Unpunish'd none attempt his gentle wards:
As my blood flows, and as these ashes fly,
Their wealth shall perish, and their manhood die."
She menac'd then the fair, with dreadful pain;
E'en were you guilty, may her threats be vain:
Not on your own account; your mother's age,
Your worthy mother, deprecates my rage:
When love and fortune smil'd, her gentle aid
Oft me conducted to the blooming maid;
My footsteps, wakeful, from afar she knew,
Unbarr'd the gate, nor fear'd the nightly dew:
Half of my life's long thread I'd pleas'd resign,
My sweet conductress, could I lengthen thine!
Still, still though much abus'd, I Delia prize;
She's still thy daughter, and enchants my eyes.
Yet though no coy cimar invest the fair;
Nor vestal fillet bind her auburn hair;
Teach her what decent modesty requires;
To crown my fire, alone, with equal fires.
Me too confine; and if, in wanton praise
Of other maids, my tongue luxuriant strays;
Let thy suspicion then no limits know,
Insult me, spurn me, as thy greatest foe;
But if your jealousies are built in air,
And patient love your usage cannot bear;
What wrath may perpetrate, my soul alarms;
For, wrath, I warn you, heeds not female charms.
Nor yet be chaste, from mean unamorous fear;
Be still most modest, when I am not near.
For those, whom neither wit nor worth secure,

[1] Literally, "She dreads not the twisted lash," the *flagellum* with which the goddess Bellona used to flog her votaries into madness.

Grow old, unpitied, palsied, worthless, poor;
Yet with each servile drudgery they strive
To keep their being's wretchedness alive!
The gay regard their woe with laughing eyes;
Swear they deserve it, and absolve the skies:
Nor Venus less exults—"May such a fate,
(From heaven she prays) upon the' inconstant wait!"
The same my wish! but oh! may we two prove,
In age, a pattern of unalter'd love!

ELEGY VIII

"This day (the Fates foretold in sacred song,
And singing drew the vital twine along,)
He comes, nor shall the gods the doom recal,
He comes, whose sword shall quell the rebel Gaul.[1]
With all her laurels, him shall conquest crown,
And nations shudder at his awful frown;
Smooth Atur,[2] now that flows through peaceful lands,
Shall fly affrighted at his hostile bands."
'Tis done! this prophecy Rome joys to see,
Far-fam'd Messala, now fulfill'd in thee:
Long triumphs ravish the spectators' eyes,
And fetter'd chieftains of enormous size;
An ivory car, with steeds as white as snow,
Sustains thy grandeur through the pompous show.
Some little share in those exploits I bore;
Witness Tarbella,[3] and the Santoigne shore;[4]
Witness the land, where steals the silent Soane;
Where rush the Garonne; and the' impetuous Rhone;
Where Loire, enamour'd of Carnutian bounds,
Leads his blue water through the yellow grounds.
Or shall his other acts adorn my theme?

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[1] Tibullus accompanied Messala upon this expedition, the conquest of Aquitain.

[2] A river of Aquitain, now L'Ador.

[3] A town in Gascony, now Tarbe.

[4] A maritime province of Aquitain.

Fair Cydnus, winding with a silver stream;
Taurus, that in the clouds his forehead hides,
And rich Cilicia from the world divides;
Taurus, from which unnumber'd rivers spring,
The savage seat of tempests, shall I sing?
Why should I tell, how sacred through the skies
Of Syrian cities, the white pigeon flies?
Why sing of Tyrian towers, which Neptune laves;
Whence the first vessel, venturous, stem'd the waves?
How shall the bard the secret source explore,
Whence, Father Nile, thou draw'st thy watery store?
Thy fields ne'er importune for rain the sky;
Thou dost benignly all their wants supply:
As Egypt, Apis mourns in mystic lays,
She joins thy praises to Osiris' praise.
  Osiris first contriv'd the crooked plough,
And pull'd ripe apples from the novice bough;
He taught the swains the savage mould to wound,
And scatter'd seed-corn in the' unpractis'd ground:
He first with poles sustain'd the reptile vine,
And show'd its infant tendrils how to twine;
Its wanton shoots instructed man to shear,
Subdue their wildness, and mature the year;
Then too, the ripen'd cluster first was trod;
Then in gay streams its cordial soul bestow'd;
This as swains quaff'd, spontaneous numbers came,
They prais'd the festal cask, and hymn'd thy name;
All ecstasy! to certain time they bound,
And beat in measur'd aukwardness the ground.
Gay bowls serene the wrinkled front of care;
Gay bowls the toil-oppressed swain repair!
And let the slave the laughing goblet drain;
He blythsome sings, though manacles enchain.
  Thee sorrow flies, Osiris, god of wine!
But songs, enchanting love, and dance are thine:
But flowers and ivy thy fair head surround,
And a loose saffron mantle sweeps the ground.
With purple robes invested, now you glow:
The shrine is shown, and flutes melodious blow:

Come then, my god, but come bedew'd with wine!
'Attend the rites, and in the dance combine;
The rites and dances are to Genius [1] due:
Benign Osiris, stand confess'd to view!
Rich unguents drop already from his hair,
His head and neck soft flowery garlands share:
O come, so shall my grateful incense rise,
And cates of honey meet thy laughing eyes!
On thee, Messala, ('tis my fervent prayer)
May heaven bestow a wise, a warlike heir;
In whom, increas'd, paternal worth may shine,
Whose acts may add a lustre to thy line,
'And transports give thee in thy life's decline!
But should the gods my fervent prayer deny,
Thy fame, my glorious friend, shall never die.
Long as (thy bounteous work) the well-made way [2]
Shall its broad pavement to the sun display,
The bards of Alba shall, in lofty rhyme,
Transmit thy glory down the tide of time!
They sing from gratitude: nor less the clown
Whom love or business have detain'd in town
Till late, as home he safely plods along,
Thee chants, Messala, in his village-song.
Bless'd morn, which still my grateful muse shall sing,
Oft rise, and with you greater blessings bring!

ELEGY IX

In vain would lovers hide their infant smart
From me, a master in the amorous art;
I read their passion in their mien and eyes,
O'erhear their whispers, and explain their sighs.
This skill no Delphian oracles bestow'd,
No augurs taught me, and no victims show'd;
But love my wrists with magic fillets bound,

---

[1] The guardian of a man from the hour of his birth to his death.
[2] Messala had charge of the construction of a branch of the "Latin Road."

Lash'd me, and, lashing, mutter'd many a sound.
No more then, Marathus,[1] indifference feign,
Else vengeful Venus will enhance your pain!
What now, sweet youth, avails your anxious care,
So oft to essence, oft to change your hair?
What though cosmetic all their aid supply,
And every artifice of dress you try;
She's not oblig'd to braids, to gems, to clothes,
Her charms to nature Pholoe[2] only owes.
What spells devote you? say, what philters bind?
What midnight sorceress fascinates your mind?
Spells can seduce the corn from neighbouring plains,
The headlong serpent halts at magic strains;
And did not cymbals stop thy prone career,
A spell thee, Luna, from thy orb would tear![3]
Why do I magic for your passion blame;
Magic is useless to a perfect frame:
You squeez'd her hands, your arms around her threw,
Join'd lip to lip, and hence your passion grew.
Cease then, fair maid, to give your lover pain;
Love hates the haughty, will avenge the swain
See youth vermilions o'er his modest face!
Can riches equal such a boy's embrace?
Then ask no bribe—when age affects the gay,
Your every smile let hoary dotage pay;
But you your arms around the stripling throw,
And scorn the treasure monarchs can bestow.
But she who gives to age her charms, for pay,
May her wealth perish, and her bloom decay!
Then when impatience thrills in every vein,
May manhood shun her, and the young disdain!
Alas! when age has silver'd o'er the head,

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[1] One of Tibullus' friends.

[2] Mentioned by Horace in his Ode to Tibullus.

[3] When the moon was eclipsed, the ancients imagined that she struggled with witchcraft; and, therefore, to relieve her, struck upon instruments of brass and other sonorous bodies, thinking that sounds would accomplish her deliverance.

And youth, that feeds the lamp of love, is fled,
In vain the toilette charms; 'tis vain to try,
Gray scanty locks with yellow nuts to dye;
You strip the tell-tales vainly from their place,
And vainly strive to mend an aged face.
Then in thine eyes while youth triumphant glows,
And with his flowers thy cheeks my fair one sows,
Incline thine heart to love, and gentle play;
Youth, youth has rapid wings, and flies away!
The fond old lover, vilify, disdain;
What praise can crown you from a stripling's pain?
Spare then the lovely boy; his beauties die;
By no dire sickness sent him from the sky:
The gods are just; you, Pholoe, are to blame;
His sallow colour from your coyness came.
O wretched youth! how oft, when absent you,
Groans rend his breast, and tears his cheeks bedew?
"Why dost thou rack me with contempt? (he cries)
The willing ever can elude their spies.
Had you, O had you felt what now I feel,
Venus would teach you from your spies to steal.
I can breathe low, can snatch the melting kiss,
And noiseless ravish love's enchanting bliss;
At midnight can securely grope my way;
The floor tread noiseless, noisless turn the key.
Poor, fruitless skill! my skill if she despise;
And cruel from the bed of rapture flies.
Or if a promise haply I obtain,
That she will recompense at night my pain;
How am I dup'd? I wakeful listen round,
And think I hear her in each casual sound.
Perish the wiles of love, and arts of dress!
In russet weeds I'll shrowd my wretchedness.
The wiles of love, and arts of dress are vain,
My fair to soften, and admittance gain."
Youth, weep no more; your eyes are swoln with tears;
No more complain; for, oh! she stops her ears.

The gods, I warn you, hate the haughty fair,

Reject their incense, and deny their prayer.
This youth, this Marathus, who wears your chains,
Late laugh'd at love, and ridicul'd its pains.
The' impatient lover in the street would stay,
Nor dreamt that vengeance would his crimes repay.
Now, now he moans his past misdeeds with tears,
A prey to love, and all its frantic fears:
Now he exclaims at female scorn and hate;
And from his soul abhors a bolted gate.
Like vengeance waits you; trust the' unerring muse,
If still you're coy, and still access refuse:
Then, how you'll wish, when old, contemn'd of all,
But vainly wish, these moments to recal!

ELEGY X[1]

Why did you swear by all the powers above,
Yet never meant to crown my longing love?
Wretch! though at first the perjur'd deed you hide,
Wrath comes with certain, though with tardy stride;
Yet, yet, offended gods, my charmer spare:
Yet pardon the first fault of one so fair!
For gold the careful farmer ploughs the plain,
And joins his oxen to the cumbrous wain;
For gold, through seas that stormy winds obey,
By stars, the sailor steers his watery way:
Yet, gracious gods, this gold from man remove,
That wicked metal brib'd the fair I love.
Soon shall you suffer greatly for your crime,
A weary wanderer in a foreign clime:
Your hair shall change, and boasted bloom decay,
By wintry tempests, and the solar ray.
"Beware of gold, how oft did I advise?
From tempting gold what mighty mischiefs rise?
Love's generous power, I said, with tenfold pain
The wretch will rack, who sells her charms for gain,

[1] The translator has been obliged to use the same freedom with this Elegy as with the fourth.

Let torture all her cruelties exert;
Torture is pastime to a venal heart.
"Nor idly dream your gallantries to hide,
The gods are ever on the sufferer's side.
With sleep or wine o'ercome, so fate ordains,
You'll blab the secret of your impious gains."
Thus oft I warn'd you; this augments my shame;
My sighs, tears, homage, henceforth I disclaim.
"No wealth shall bribe my constancy, you swore,
Be mine the bard, you sigh'd, I crave no more:
Not all Campania shall my heart entice,
For thee Campania's autumns I despise.
Let Bacchus in Falernian vineyards stray,
Not Bacchus' vineyards shall my faith betray."
Such strong professions, in so soft a strain,
Might well deceive a captivated swain;
Such strong professions might aversion charm,
Slow doubt determine, and indifference warm.
Nay more, you wept, unpractis'd to betray;
I kiss'd your cheeks, and wip'd the tears away.
But if I tempting gold unjustly blame,
And you have left me for another flame;
May he, like you, seem kind; like you, deceive;
And oh may you, like cheated me, believe!
Oft I by night the torch myself would bear,
That none our tender converse might o'erhear;
When least expected, oft some youth I led,
A youth all beauty, to the genial bed;
And tutor'd him your conquest to complete,
By soft enticements, and a fond deceit.
By these I foolish hop'd to gain your love:
Who than Tibullus could more cautious prove?
Fir'd with uncommon powers, I swept the lyre,
And sent you melting strains of soft desire:
The thought o'erspreads my face with conscious shame,
Doom, doom them victims to the seas or flame.
No verse be their's, who love's soft fires profane,
And sell inestimable joys for gain.
But you who first the lovely maid decoy'd,

By each adulterer be your wife enjoy'd.
And when each youth has rifled all her charms,
May bed-gowns guard her from your loathed arms!
May she, oh may she like your sister prove,
As fam'd for drinking, far more fam'd for love!
'Tis true, the bottle is her chief delight,
She knows no better way to pass the night;
Your wife more knowing can the night improve,
To joys of Bacchus joins the joys of love.
Think'st thou for thee, the toilet is her care?
For thee, that fillets bind her well-dress'd hair?
For thee, that Tyrian robes her charms enfold?
For thee, her arms are deck'd with burnish'd gold?
By these, some youth the wanton would entice,
For him she dresses, and for him she sighs;
To him she prostitutes, unaw'd by shame,
Your house, your pocket, and your injur'd fame:
Nor blame her conduct; say, ye young, what charms
Can beauty taste in gout and age's arms?
Less nice my fair one, she for money can
Caress a gouty, impotent, old man:
O thou by generous love, too justly blam'd!
All, all that love could give, my passion claim'd.
Yet since thou couldst so mercenary prove,
The more deserving shall engross my love;
Then thou wilt weep when these ador'd you see:
Weep on, thy tears will transport give to me.
To Venus I'll suspend a golden shield,
With this inscription grav'd upon the field:
"Tibullus, freed at last from amorous woes,
This offering, queen of bliss! on thee bestows:
And humbly begs, that henceforth thou wilt guard
From such a passion thy devoted bard."

ELEGY XI

Who was the first that forg'd the deadly blade?
Of rugged steel his savage soul was made:
By him, his bloody flag ambition wav'd;

And grisly carnage through the battle rav'd.
Yet wherefore blame him? we're ourselves to blame;
Arms first were forg'd to kill the savage game:
Death-dealing battles were unknown of old;
Death-dealing battles took their rise from gold:
When beachen bowls on oaken tables stood,
When temperate acorns were our fathers' food;
The swain slept peaceful with his flocks around,
No trench was open'd, and no fortress frown'd.
Oh! had I liv'd in gentle days like these,
To love devoted, and to home-felt ease;
Compell'd I had not been those arms to wear,
Nor had the trumpet forc'd me from the fair:
But now I'm drag'd to war, perhaps my foe
E'en now prepares the' inevitable blow!
Come then, paternal gods, whose help I've known
From birth to manhood, still protect your own:
Nor blush, my gods, though carv'd of ancient wood;
So carv'd in our forefathers' times you stood:
And though in no proud temples you were prais'd,
Nor foreign incense on your altars blaz'd:
Yet white-rob'd faith conducted every swain;
Yet meek-ey'd piety seren'd the plain;
While clustering grapes, or wheat-wreaths round your hair,
Appeas'd your anger, and engag'd your care;
Or dulcet cakes himself the farmer paid,
When crown'd his wishes by your powerful aid;
While his fair daughter brought with her from home
The luscious offering of a honey-comb:
If now you'll aid me in the hour of need,
Your care I'll recompense—a boar shall bleed.
In white array'd, I'll myrtle baskets bear,
And myrtle foliage round my temples wear:
In arms redoubtable let others shine,
By Mars protected, mow the martial line;
You let me please; my head with roses crown
And every care in flowing goblets drown:
Then, when I'm joyous, let the soldier tell,
What foes were captur'd, and what leaders fell;

Or on the boar describe with flowing wine,
The furious onset, and the flying line.
For reason whispers, "Why will short-liv'd man
By war contract his too contracted span?
Yet when he leaves the cheerful realms of light,
No laughing bowls, no harvests cheer the sight;
But howl the damn'd, the triple monster roars,
And Charon grumbles on the Stygian shores:
By fiery lakes the blasted phantoms yell,
Or shrowd their anguish in the depths of hell.
In a thatch'd cottage happier he, by far,
Who never hears of arms, of gold, or war;
His chaste embrace a numerous offspring crown,
He courts not fortune's smile, nor dreads her frown;
While lenient baths at home his wife prepares,
He, and his sons, attend their fleecy cares:
As old, as poor, as peaceful may I be,
So guard my flocks, and such an offspring see.
Meantime, soft peace, descend:—O! bless our plains!
Soft peace to plough with oxen taught the swains.
Peace plants the orchard, and matures the vine,
And first gay-laughing press'd the ruddy wine;
The father quaffs, deep quaff his joyous friends,
Yet to his son a well-stor'd vault descends.
Bright shine the ploughshare, our support and joy;
But rust, deep rust, the veteran's arms destroy.
The villager (his sacred offerings paid
In the dark grove, and consecrated shade),
His wife and sons, now darkness parts the throng,
Drives home, and whistles, as he reels along.
Then triumphs Venus; then love-feuds prevail;
The youth all jealous then the fair assail;
Doors, windows fly; no deference they pay,
The chastest suffer in the' ungentle fray:
These beat their breasts, and melt in moving tears;
The lover weeps, and blames his rage and fears;
Love sits between, unmov'd with tears and sighs,
And with incentives sly the feud supplies.
Ye youths, though stung with taunts, of blows beware;

They, they are impious, who can beat the fair:
If much provok'd, or rend their silken zone,
Or on their tresses be your anger shown:
But if nor this your passion can appease,
Until the charmer weep, the charmer tease.
Bless'd anger, if the fair dissolves in tears!
Bless'd youth, her fondness undisguis'd appears!
But crush the wretch, O War! with all thy woes,
Who to rough usage adds the crime of blows.
Bland peace, descend, with plenty on our plains,
And bless with ease and laughing sport the swains.

BOOK II

ELEGY I[1]

Attend! and favour! as our sires ordain;
The fields we lustrate, and the rising grain:
Come, Bacchus, and thy horns with grapes surround;
Come, Ceres, with thy wheaten garland crown'd;
This hallow'd day suspend each swain his toil,
Rest let the plough, and rest the' uncultur'd soil:
Unyoke the steer, his racks heap high with hay,
And deck with wreaths his honest front to-day.
Be all your thoughts to this grand work applied!
And lay, ye thrifty fair, your wool aside!
Hence I command you mortals from the rite,
Who spent in amorous blandishment the night,
The vernal powers in chastity delight.
But come, ye pure, in spotless garbs array'd,
For you the solemn festival is made!
Come! follow thrice the victim round the lands;
In running water purify your hands.
See! to the flames the willing victim come:
Ye swains with olive crown'd, be dumb! be dumb!
" From ills, O sylvan gods, our limits shield,
To-day we purge the farmer and the field;

[1] A description of the Ambarvalia, a festival instituted by Acca Laurentia for procuring a blessing on the fields.

Oh! let no weeds destroy the rising grain;
By no fell prowler be the lambkin slain;
So shall the hind dread penury no more;
But, gaily smiling o'er his plenteous store,
With liberal hand shall larger billets bring,
Heap the broad hearth, and hail the genial spring.
His numerous bond-slaves all in goodly rows,
With wicker huts your altars shall enclose.
That done, they'll cheerly laugh, and dance, and play,
And praise your goodness in their uncouth lay."
The gods assent: see! see! those entrails show,
That heaven approves of what is done below!
Now quaff Falernian; let my Chian wine,
Pour'd from the cask, in massy goblets shine!
Drink deep, my friends; all, all be madly gay,
'Twere irreligion not to reel to-day!
Health to Messala; every peasant toast,
And not a letter of his name be lost![1]
O come, my friend, whom Gallic triumphs grace,
Thou noblest splendour of an ancient race;
Thou, whom the arts all emulously crown,
Sword of the state, and honour of the gown;
My theme is gratitude, inspire my lays!
O, be my genius! while I strive to praise
The rural deities, the rural plain;
The use of foodful corn they taught the swain.
They taught man first the social hut to raise,
And thatch it o'er with turf, or leafy sprays:
They first to tame the furious bull essay'd,
And on rude wheels the rolling carriage laid.
Man left his savage ways; the garden glowed,
Fruits, not their own, admiring trees bestow'd,
While through the thirsty ground meandering runnels flow'd.
There bees of sweets despoil the breathing spring,
And to their cells the dulcet plunder bring.

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[1] Upon certain occasions the Romans drank a bumper for every letter of their friend or mistress's name. They received this custom from the Grecians.

The ploughman first, to soothe the toilsome day,
Chanted in measur'd feet his sylvan lay:
And, seed-time o'er, he first in blithsome vein
Pip'd to his household gods the hymning strain.
Then first the press with purple wine o'er-ran,
And cooling water made it fit for man.
The village-lad first made a wreath of flowers,
To deck in spring the tutelary powers.
Bless'd be the country! yearly there the plain
Yields, when the dog-star burns, the golden grain:
Thence too thy chorus, Bacchus, first began;
The painted clown first laid the tragic plan.
A goat, the leader of the shaggy throng,
The village sent it, recompens'd the song.[1]
There too the sheep his woolly treasure wears;
There too the swain his woolly treasure shears;
This to the thrifty dame long work supplies;
The distaff hence and basket took their rise.
Hence too, the various labours of the loom,
Thy praise, Minerva, and Arachne's doom!
Mid mountain herds love first drew vital air,
Unknown to man, and man had nought to fear;
'Gainst herds, his bow the' unskilful archer drew;
Ah! my pierc'd heart, an archer now too true!
Now herds may roam untouch'd; 'tis Cupid's joy,
The brave to vanquish, and to fix the coy.
The youth whose heart the soft emotion feels,
Nor sighs for wealth, nor waits at grandeur's heels;
Age, fir'd by love, is touch'd by shame no more,
But blabs its follies at the fair-one's door.
Led by soft love, the tender trembling fair
Steals to her swain, and cheats suspicion's care,
With outstretch'd arms she wins her darkling way,
And tiptoe listens, that no noise betray.
Ah! wretched those, on whom dread Cupid frowns:
How happy they, whose mutual choice he crowns!

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[1] The etymology of the words *tragedy* ("goat song") and *comedy* ("village song") indicates the origin of these forms of drama.

Will love partake the banquet of the day?
O come—but throw thy burning shafts away.
Ye swains, begin to mighty love the song;
Your songs, ye swains, to mighty love belong!
Breathe out aloud your wishes for my fold,
Your own soft vows in whispers may be told.
But hark! loud mirth and music fire the crowd—
Ye now may venture to request aloud.
Pursue your sports; Night mounts her curtain'd wane;
The dancing Stars compose her filial train;
Black muffled Sleep steals on with silent pace,
And Dreams flit last, Imagination's race.

ELEGY II

Rise, happy morn, without a cloud arise!
This morn, Cornutus[1] bless'd his mother's eyes!
Hence each unholy wish, each adverse sound,
As we his altar's hallow'd verge surround.
Let rich Arabian odours scent the skies,
And sacred incense from his altar rise;
Implor'd, thou tutelary god, descend!
And, deck'd with flowery wreaths, the rites attend!
Then as his brows with precious unguents flow,
Sweet sacred cakes, and liberal wine bestow.
O Genius! grant whate'er my friend desires:
The cake is scatter'd, and the flame aspires!
Ask then, my noble friend, whate'er you want:
What silent still? your prayer the god will grant:
Uncovetous of rural wide domains,
You beg no woody hills, no cultur'd plains:
Not venal, you request no eastern stores,
Where ruddy waters lave the gemmy shores:
Your wish I guess; you wish a beauteous spouse,
Joy of your joy, and faithful to your vows.
'Tis done, my friend: see nuptial love appears!
See, in his hand a yellow[2] zone he bears!

[1] Probably the Prætor of that name.
[2] The color consecrated to Hymen.

A yellow zone, that spite of years shall last,
And heighten fondness, ev'n when beauty's pass'd.
With happy sighs, great power, confirm our prayer;
With endless concord bless the married pair.
O grant, dread Genius! that a numerous race
Of beauteous infants crown their fond embrace:
Their beauteous infants round thy feet shall play,
And keep with custom'd rites this happy day.

ELEGY III

My fair,[1] Cornutus, to the country's flown;
Oh, how insipid is the city grown!
No taste have they for elegance refin'd;
No tender bosoms, who remain behind:
Now Cytherea glads the laughing plain,
And smiles and sports compose her silvan train.
Now Cupid joys to learn the ploughman's phrase,
And, clad a peasant, o'er the fallows strays.
Oh! how the weighty prong I'll busy wield,
Should the fair wander to the labour'd field;
A farmer then, the crooked ploughshare hold,
Whilst the dull ox prepares the vigorous mould:
I'd not complain though Phœbus burnt the lands,
And painful blisters swell'd my tender hands.
Admetus' herds the fair Apollo drove,
In spite of med'cine's power, a prey to love;
Nor aught avail'd to soothe his amorous care,
His lyre of silver sound, or waving hair.
To quench their thirst, the kine to streams he led,
And drove them from their pasture to the shed.
The milk to curdle, then, the fair he taught;
And from the cheese to strain the dulcet draught.
Oft, oft, his virgin-sister blush'd for shame,
As bearing lambkins o'er the field he came:
Oft would he sing, the listening vales among,
Till lowing oxen broke the plaintive song.

[1] Nemesis, the sweetheart to whom the remaining elegies in this book are addressed.

To Delphi, trembling anxious chiefs repair,
But got no answer; Phœbus was not there.
Thy curling locks that charm'd a step-dame's eye,
A jealous step-dame, now neglected fly.
To see thee, Phœbus, thus disfigur'd stray!
Who could discover the fair god of day?
Constrain'd by Cupid in a cot to pine,
Where was thy Delos, where the Pythian shrine?
Thrice happy days! when love almighty sway'd,
And openly the gods his will obey'd.
Now love's soft powers became a common jest—
Yet those, who feel his influence in their breast,
The prude's contempt, the wise man's sneer despise,
Nor would his chains forego to rule the skies.
Curs'd farm! that forc'd my Nemesis from town,
Blasts taint thy vines, and rains thy harvests drown.
Though hymns implore your aid, great god of wine!
Assist the lover, and neglect the vine;
To shades, unpunish'd, ne'er let beauty stray;
Not all your vintage can its absence pay;
Rather than harvest should the fair detain,
May rills and acorns feed the' unactive swain!
The swains of old, no golden Ceres knew;
And yet how fervent was their love and true!
Their melting vows the Paphian queen approv'd,
And every valley witness'd how they lov'd.
Then lurk'd no spies to catch the willing maid;
Doorless each house; in vain no shepherd pray'd.
Once more, ye simple usages obtain!
No—lead me, drive me to the cultur'd plain!
Enchain me, whip me, if the fair command:
Whip'd and enchain'd, I'll plough the stubborn land!

ELEGY IV

Chains, and a haughty fair, I fearless view:
Hopes of paternal freedom, all adieu!
Ah, when will love compassionate my woes?
In one sad tenor my existence flows:

Whether I kiss or bite the galling chain,
Alike my pleasure, and alike my pain.
I burn, I burn, O banish my despair!
Oh, ease my torture, too too cruel fair!
Rather than feel such vast, such matchless woe,
I'd rise some rock o'erspread with endless snow:
Or frown a cliff on some disastrous shore,
Where ships are wreck'd, and tempests ever roar!
In pensive gloominess I pass the night,
Nor feel contentment at the dawn of light.
What though the god of verse my woes indite,
What though I soothing elegies can write,
No strains of elegy her pride control;
Gold is the passport to her venal soul.
I ask not of the nine the epic lay;
Ye nine! or aid my passion, or away.
I ask not to describe in lofty strain
The sun's eclipses, or the lunar wane;
To win admission to the haughty maid,
Alone I crave your elegiac aid;
But if she still contemns the tearful lay,
Ye, and your elegies, away, away!
In vain I ask, but gold ne'er asks in vain;
Then will I desolate the world for gain!
For gold, I'll impious plunder every shrine;
But chief, O Venus! will I plunder thine.
By thee compell'd, I love a venal maid,
And quit for bloody fields my peaceful shade:
By thee compell'd, I rob the hallow'd shrine,
Then chiefly, Venus, will I plunder thine!
Perish the man! whose curs'd industrious toil
Or finds the gem, or dyes the woolly spoil;
Hence, hence, the sex's avarice arose,
And art with nature not enough bestows:
Hence the fierce dog was posted for a guard,
The fair grew venal, and their gates were barr'd.
But weighty presents vigilance o'ercome,
The gate bursts open, and the dog is dumb.
From venal charms, ye gods! what mischiefs flow!

The joy, how much o'er-balanc'd by the woe!
Hence, hence, so few, sweet love, frequent thy fane;
Hence, impious slander loads thy guiltless reign.
But ye, who sell your heavenly charms for hire,
Your ill-got riches be consum'd with fire!
May not one lover strive to quench the blaze,
But smile malicious, as o'er all it preys!
And when ye die, no gentle friend be near,
To catch your breath, or shed a genuine tear;
Behind the corpse, to march in solemn show,
Or Syrian odours on the pile bestow.
Far other fates attend the generous maid,
Though age and sickness bid her beauties fade,
Still she's rever'd; and when death's easy call
Has freed her spirit from life's anxious thrall,
The pitying neighbours all her loss deplore,
And many a weeping friend besets the door;
While some old lover, touch'd with grateful woe,
Shall yearly garlands on her tomb bestow;
And, home returning, thus the fair address,
"Light may the turf thy gentle bosom press."
'Tis truth; but what has truth with love to do?
Imperious Cupid, I submit to you!
To sell my father's seat should you command;
Adieu my father's gods, my father's land!
From madding mares, whate'er of poison flows,
Or on the forehead of their offspring grows;[1]
Whate'er Medea brew'd of baleful juice,
What noxious herbs Emathian hills[2] produce;
Of all, let Nemesis a draught compose,
Or mingle poisons, feller still than those;
If she but smile, the deadly cup I'll drain,
Forget her avarice, and exult in pain!

[1] The herb coltsfoot was supposed to inflame the sexual desire of horses; see Theocritus, Idyl II. A fig-like excrescence, appearing on the forehead of a foal, and bitten off by the mother, was supposed to make the mare passionately fond of the offspring.

[2] In Thrace, the seat of enchantment.

ELEGY V

To hear our solemn vows, O Phœbus! deign:
A novel pontiff[1] treads thy sacred fane;
Nor distant hear, dread power! 'tis Rome's request,
That with thy golden lyre thou stand'st confess'd:
Deign, mighty bard! to strike the vocal string,
And praise thy pontiff; we, his praises sing:
Around thy brows triumphant laurels twine,
Thine altar visit, and thy rites divine:
New flush thy charms, new curl thy waving hair;
O come the god, in vestment and in air!
When Saturn was dethron'd; so crown'd with bays,
So rob'd, thou sungst the' almighty victor's praise.[2]
What fate, from gods and man, has wrapt in night,
Prophetic flashes on thy mental sight:
From thee, diviners learn their prescient lore,
On reeking bowels, as they thoughtful pore:
The seer thou teachest the success of things,
As flies the bird, or feeds, or screams, or sings:
The sibyl-leaves if Rome ne'er sought in vain;
Thou gav'st a meaning to the mystic strain:
Thy sacred influence may this pontiff know,
And as he reads them, with the prophet glow.
When great Æneas snatch'd his aged sire,
And burning Lares, from the Grecian fire;

[1] Messalinus, to whom the following noble Elegy is addressed, was the son of the illustrious Messala. This young nobleman, whom both historians and poets represent as inheriting his father's eloquence, had been appointed one of the quindecemviral priests, to whose care the keeping and interpretation of the Sibylline oracles were intrusted. As these venerable writings had been deposited by Augustus under the statue of Apollo, in his new temple, erected on Mount Palatine; and as Apollo was supposed to preside over vatication, and in a particular manner over these mysterious volumes; the poet begins his poem with an address to Apollo, whom he earnestly implores to be present at the inauguration of the new pontiff.

[2] Augustus.

She,[1] she foretold this empire fix'd by fate,
And all the triumphs of the Roman state;
Yet when he saw his Ilion wrap'd in flame,
He scarce could credit the mysterious dame.
(Quirinus had not plan'd eternal Rome,
Nor had his brother met his early doom;
Where now Jove's temple swells, low hamlets stood,
And domes ascend, where heifers crop'd their food.
Sprinkled with milk,[2] Pan grac'd an oak's dun shade,
And scythe-arm'd Pales watch'd the mossy glade;
For help from Pan, to Pan on every bough
Pipes hung, the grateful shepherd's vocal vow,
Of reeds, still lessening, was the gift compos'd,
And friendly wax the' unequal junctures clos'd.
So where Velabrian streets like cities seem,
One little wherry plied the lazy stream,
O'er which the wealthy shepherd's favourite maid
Was to her swain, on holidays, convey'd;
The swain, his truth of passion to declare,
Or lamb, or cheese, presented to the fair.)

The Cumæan Sibyl speaks

"Fierce brother of the power of soft desire,
Who fly'st, with Trojan gods, the Grecian fire!
Now Jove assigns thee Laurentine abodes,
Those friendly plains invite thy banish'd gods:
There shall a nobler Troy herself applaud,
Admire her wanderings, and the Grecian fraud!
There, thou from yonder sacred stream shalt rise
A god thyself, and mingle with the skies![3]
No more thy Phrygians for their country sigh,
See conquest o'er your shatter'd navy fly!
See the Rutulian tents, a mighty blaze!
Thou, Turnus, soon shalt end thy hateful days!

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[1] The Sibyl.

[2] It was customary to sprinkle the sylvan gods, Pan and Pales, with milk.

[3] See Ovid's Metam. book XIV.

The camp I see, Lavinium greets my view,
And Alba, brave Ascanius! built by you:
I see thee, Ilia! leave the vestal fire;
And, clasp'd by Mars, in amorous bliss expire!
On Tyber's bank, thy sacred robes I see,
And arms abandon'd, eager god! by thee.
Your hills crop fast, ye herds! while fate allows;
Eternal Rome shall rise, where now ye brouze:
Rome, that shall stretch her irresistless reign,
Wherever Ceres views her golden grain:
Far as the east extends his purple ray,
And where the west shuts up the gates of day.
The truth I sing: so may the laurels prove
Safe food,[1] and I be screen'd from guilty love."
Thus sung the Sibyl, and address'd her prayer,
Phœbus! to thee: and, madding, loos'd her hair.
Nor, Phœbus! give him only these to know,
A further knowledge on thy priest bestow:
Let him interpret what thy favourite maid,
What Amalthea, what Mermessia said:
Let him interpret what Albuna bore
Through Tyber's waves, unwet, to Tyber's furthest shore.
When stony tempests fell, when comets glar'd,
Intestine wars their oracles declar'd:
The sacred groves (our ancestors relate)
Foretold the changes of the Roman state:
To charge the clarion sounded in the sky,
Arms clash'd, blood ran, and warriors seem'd to die:
With monstrous prodigies the year began;
An annual darkness the whole globe o'erran;
Apollo, shorn of every beamy ray,
Oft strove, but strove in vain, to light the day:
The statues of the gods wept tepid tears;
And speaking oxen fill'd mankind with fears!
These were of old: no more, Apollo! frown;
But in the waves each adverse omen drown.[2]

[1] A frequent chewing of the laurel was supposed to be of great efficacy in raising a spirit of divination and poetry.

[2] Monstrous births, by way of expiation, were thrown into the sea.

O! let thy bays, in crackling flames ascend;
So shall the year with joy begin and end!
The bays give prosperous signs; rejoice, ye swains!
Propitious Ceres shall reward your pains.
With must the jolly rustic purpled o'er,
Shall squeeze rich clusters, which their tribute pour,
Till vats are wanting, to contain their store.
Far hence, ye wolves! the mellow shepherds bring
Their gifts to Pales, and her praises sing.
Now, fir'd with wine, they solemn bonfires raise,
And leap, untimorous, through the strawy blaze!
From every cot unnumber'd children throng,
Frequent the dance, and louder raise the song:
And while in mirth the hours they thus employ,
At home the grandsire tends his little boy;
And, in each feature pleas'd himself to trace,
Foretels his prattler will adorn the race.

The sylvan youth, their grateful homage paid,
Where plays some streamlet, seek the' embowering shade;
Or stretch'd on soft enamell'd meadows lie,
Where thickest umbrage cools the summer sky:
With roses, see! the sacred cup is crown'd,
Hark! music breathes her animating sound:
The couch of turf, and festal tables stand
Of turf, erected by each shepherd-hand;
And all well-pleas'd, the votive feast prepare,
Each one his goblet, and each one his share.
Now drunk, they blame their stars, and curse the maid;
But sober, deprecate whate'er they said.

Perish thy shafts, Apollo! and thy bow!
If love unarmed in our forests go.
Yet since he learn'd to wing the' unerring dart,
Much cause has man to curse his fatal art;
But most have I:—the sun has wheel'd his round
Since first I felt the deadly festering wound;
Yet, yet I fondly, madly, wish to burn,
Abjure indifference, and at comfort spurn;
And though from Nemesis my genius flows,
Her scarce I sing, so weighty are my woes!

O cruel love! how joyous should I be,
Your arrows broke, and torch extinct, to see!
From you, my want of reverence to the skies!
From you, my woes and imprecations rise!
Yet I advise you, too relentless fair,
(As heaven protects the bards) a bard to spare!
E'en now, the pontiff claims my loftiest lay,
In triumph, soon he'll mount the sacred way.
Then pictur'd towns shall show successful war,
And spoils and chiefs attend his ivory car:
Myself will bear the laurel in my hand;
And, pleas'd, amid the pleas'd spectators stand:
While war-worn veterans, with laurels crown'd,
With Io-triumphs shake the streets around.
His father hails him, as he rides along,
And entertains with pompous shows the throng.
O Phœbus! kindly deign to grant my prayer;
So may'st thou ever wave thy curled hair;
So ever may thy virgin-sister's name
Preserve the lustre of a spotless fame.

ELEGY VI

Macer campaigns; who now will thee obey,
O Love! if Macer[1] dare forego thy sway?
Put on the crest, and grasp the burnish'd shield,
Pursue the base deserter to the field:
Or if to winds he gives the loosen'd sail,
Mount thou the deck, and risk the stormy gale:
To dare desert thy sweetly-pleasing pains,
For stormy seas, or sanguinary plains!
'Tis, Cupid! thine, the wonderer to reclaim,
Regain thy honour, and avenge thy name.

[1] Æmilius Macer, famous for his gallantry and wit, had been intrusted by the successor of Julius with the execution of some military enterprise. At his departure from Rome, it is probable, he boasted to our poet, that however deeply he seemed engaged in love, yet was his heart his own, and now only panted for military fame.

If such thou spar'st, a soldier I will be,
The meanest soldier, and abandon thee.
Adieu, ye trifling loves! farewell, ye fair!
The trumpet charms me, I to camps repair;
The martial look, the martial garb assume,
And see the laurel on my forehead bloom.
My vaunts how vain! debar'd the cruel maid,
The warrior softens, and my laurels fade.
Piqu'd to the soul, how frequent have I swore,
Her gate so servile to approach no more?
Unconscious what I did, I still return'd,
Was still denied access; and yet, I burn'd!
Ye youths, whom love commands with angry sway,
Attend his wars, like me, and pleas'd obey.
This iron age approves his sway no more;
All fly to camps for gold, and gold adore:
Yet gold clothes kindred states in hostile arms;
Hence blood and death, confusion and alarms!
Mankind for lust of gold, at once defy
The naval combat, and the stormy sky!
The soldier hopes, by martial spoils, to gain
Flocks without number, and a rich domain:
His hopes obtain'd by every horrid crime,
He seeks for marble in each foreign clime:
A thousand yoke sustain the pillar'd freight,
And Rome, surpris'd, beholds the enormous weight.
Let such with moles the furious deep enclose,
Where fish may swim unhurt, though winter blows:
Let flocks and villas call the spoiler, lord!
And be the spoiler by the fair ador'd!
Let one we know, a whip'd barbarian slave,[1]
Live like a king, with kingly pride behave:
Be ours the joys of economic ease,
From bloody fields remote, and stormy seas.
In gold, alas! the venal fair delight:
Since beauty sighs for spoil, for spoil I'll fight.

---

[1] Demetrius, the freed-man of Pompey, by attending that general in his conquests, amassed greater wealth than his master himself.

In all my plunder Nemesis shall shine;
Yours be the profit, be the peril mine:
To deck your heavenly charms the silk-worm dies,
Embroidery labours, and the shuttle flies.
For you, be rifled ocean's pearly store;
To you Pactolus send his golden ore.
Ye Indians, blacken'd by the nearer sun,
Before her steps in splendid liveries run;
For you shall wealthy Tyre and Afric vie,
To yield the purple, and the scarlet dye.

ELEGY VII

Thousands in death would seek an end of woe;
But hope, deceitful hope! prevents the blow.
Hope plants the forest, and she sows the plain;
And feeds, with future granaries, the swain:
Hope snares the winged vagrants of the sky,
Hope cheats in reedy brooks the scaly fry;
By hope, the fetter'd slave, the drudge of fate,
Sings, shakes his irons, and forgets his state;
Hope promis'd you; you, haughty, still deny;
Yield to the goddess; O my fair! comply.
Hope whisper'd me, "Give sorrow to the wind!
The haughty fair-one shall at last be kind."
Yet, yet, you treat me with the same disdain:
O let not hope's soft whispers prove in vain!
  Untimely fate your sister snatch'd away;
Spare me, O spare me; by her shade I pray!
So shall my garlands deck her virgin-tomb;
So shall I weep, no hypocrite, her doom!
So may her grave with rising flowers be dress'd,
And the green turf lie lightly on her breast.
  Ah me, will nought avail? the world I'll fly,
And, prostrate at her tomb, a suppliant sigh!
To her attentive ghost of you complain;
Tell my long sorrowing, tell of your disdain.
Oft, when alive, in my behalf she spoke:
Your endless coyness must her shade provoke;

With ugly dreams she'll haunt your hour of rest,
And weep before you, an unwelcome guest!
Ghastly and pale, as when besmear'd with blood,
Oh, fatal fall! she pass'd the Stygian flood.
No more, my strains! your eyes with tears o'erflow,
This moving object renovates your woe:
You, you are guiltless! I your maid accuse;
You generous are! she, she has selfish views.
Nay, were you guilty, I'll no more complain;
One tear from you o'erpays a life of pain.
She, Phryne, promis'd to promote my vows:
She took, but never gave my billet-doux.
You're gone abroad, she confidently swears,
Oft when your sweet-ton'd voice salutes mine ears:
Or, when you promise to reward my pains,
That you're afraid, or indispos'd, she feigns:
Then madding jealousy inflames my breast;
Then fancy represents a rival bless'd:
I wish thee, Phryne! then a thousand woes;—
And if the gods with half my wishes close,
Phryne! a wretch of wretches thou shalt be,
And vainly beg of death to set thee free.

BOOK III

ELEGY I

Poet

THY calends, Mars! are come, from whence of old
The year's beginning our forefathers told:
Now various gifts through every house impart
The pleasing tokens of the friendly heart.
To my Neæra, tuneful virgins! say,
What shall I give, what honour shall I pay?
Dear, e'en if fickle; dearer, if my friend!
To the lov'd fair, what present shall I send?

Muses

Gold wins the venal, verse the lovely maid:
In your smooth numbers be her charms display'd.

On polish'd ivory let the sheets be roll'd,
Your name in signature, the edges gold.
No pumice spare, to smooth each parchment scroll;
In a gay wrapper then secure the whole.
Thus, to adorn your poems be your care;
And, thus adorn'd, transmit them to the fair.

Poet

Fair maids of Pindus! I your counsel praise:
As you advise me, I'll adorn my lays:
But by your streams, and by your shades, I pray,
Yourselves the volume to the fair convey.
O let it lowly at her feet be laid,
Ere the gilt wrapper or the edges fade;
Then let her tell me, if her flames decline,
If quite extinguish'd, or if still she's mine.
But first, your graceful salutations paid,
In terms submissive thus address the maid:
"Chaste fair! the bard, who doats upon your charms,
And once could clasp them in his nuptial arms,
This volume sends; and humbly hopes that you,
With kind indulgence, will the present view.
You, you! he prizes more, he vows, than life;
Still a lov'd sister, or again his wife.
But oh! may Hymen bless his virtuous fire,
And once more grant you to his fond desire!
Fix'd in this hope, he'll reach the dreary shore,
Where sense shall fail, and memory be no more."

ELEGY II

Hard was the first, who ventur'd to divide
The youthful bridegroom and the tender bride:
More hard the bridegroom, who can bear the day,
When force has torn his tender bride away.
Here too my patience, here my manhood fails;
The brave grow dastards when fierce grief assails:
Die, die I must! the truth I freely own;
My life too burdensome a load is grown.

Then, when I flit a thin, an empty shade;
When on the mournful pile my corse is laid;
With melting grief, with tresses loose and torn,
Wilt thou, Neæra! for thy husband mourn?
A parent's anguish will thy mother show,
For the lost youth, who liv'd, who died for you?
But see the flames o'er all my body stray!
And now my shade ye call, and now ye pray,
In black array'd: the flame forgets to soar;
And now pure water on your hands ye pour.
My lov'd remains next gather'd in a heap,
With wine ye sprinkle, and in milk ye steep.
The moisture dry'd, within the urn ye lay
My bones, and to the monument convey.
Panchaian odours thither ye will bring,
And all the produce of an eastern spring:
But what than eastern springs I hold more dear,
O wet my ashes with a genuine tear!
Thus, by you both lamented, let me die;
Be thus perform'd my mournful obsequy!
Then shall these lines, by some throng'd way, relate
The dear occasion of my dismal fate:
"Here lies poor Lygdamus; a lovely wife,
Torn from his arms, cut short his thread of life."

ELEGY III

Why did I supplicate the powers divine?
Why votive incense burn at every shrine?
Not that I marble palaces might own,
To draw spectators, and to make me known;
Not that my teams might plough new purchas'd plains,
And bounteous autumn glad my countless swains:
I beg'd with you my youthful days to share,
I beg'd in age to clasp the lovely fair;
And when my stated race of life was o'er,
I beg'd to pass alone the Stygian shore.
Can treasur'd gold the tortur'd breast compose?
Or plains, wide cultur'd, soothe the lover's woes?

Can marble-pillar'd domes, the pride of art,
Secure from sorrow the possessor's heart?
Not circling woods, resembling sacred groves,
Nor Parian pavements, nor gay gilt alcoves,
Not all the gems that load an eastern shore,
Not whate'er else the greedy great adore,
Possess'd, can shield the owner's breast from woe,
Since fickle fortune governs all below:
Such toys, in little minds, may envy raise;
Still little minds improper objects praise.
Poor let me be; for poverty can please
With you; without you, crowns could give no ease.
  Shine forth, bright morn! and every bliss impart,
Restore Neæra to my doating heart!
For if her glad return the gods deny,
If I solicit still in vain the sky,
Nor power, nor all the wealth this globe contains,
Can ever mitigate my heartfelt pains:
Let others these enjoy; be peace my lot,
Be mine Neæra, mine an humble cot!
Saturnia! grant thy suppliant's timid prayer;
And aid me, Venus! from thy pearly chair.
  Yet, if the sisters, who o'er fate preside,
My vows contemning, still detain my bride;
Cease, breast, to heave! cease, anxious blood, to flow!
Come, death! transport me to the realms below.

ELEGY IV

Last night's ill-boding dreams, ye gods, avert!
Nor plague, with portents, a poor lover's heart.
But why? From prejudice our terrors rise;
Vain visions have no commerce with the skies:
The event of things the gods alone foresee,
And Tuscan priests[1] foretel what they decree.
Dreams flit at midnight round the lover's head,
And timorous man alarm with idle dread:

[1] The practice of augury originated in Tuscany.

And hence oblations, to divert the woe,
Weak superstitious minds on heaven bestow.
But since whate'er the gods foretel is true,
And man's oft warn'd, mysterious dreams! by you:
Dread Juno! make my nightly visions vain,
Vain make my boding fears, and calm my pain.
The blessed gods, you know, I ne'er revil'd,
And nought iniquous e'er my heart defil'd.
Now Night had lav'd her coursers in the main,
And left to dewy dawn a doubtful reign;
Bland sleep, that from the couch of sorrow flies,
(The wretch's solace) had not clos'd my eyes.
At last, when morn unbarr'd the gates of light,
A downy slumber shut my labouring sight:
A youth appear'd, with virgin-laurel crown'd,
He mov'd majestic, and I heard the sound.
Such charms, such manly charms, were never seen,
As fir'd his eyes, and harmoniz'd his mien:
His hair, in ringlets of an auburn hue,
Shed Syrian sweets, and o'er his shoulders flew.
As white as thine, fair Luna, was his skin,
So vein'd with azure, and as smoothly thin;
So soft a blush vermilion'd o'er his face,
As when a maid first melts in man's embrace;
Or when the fair with curious art unite
The purple amaranth and lily white.
A bloom like his, when ting'd by autumn's pride,
Reddens the apple on the sunny side;
A Tyrian tunic to his ancles flow'd,
Which through its sirfled plaits his godlike beauties show'd.
A lyre, the present Mulciber bestow'd,
On his left arm with easy grandeur glow'd;
The peerless work of virgin gold was made,
With ivory, gems, and tortoise interlaid;
O'er all the vocal strings his fingers stray,
The vocal strings his fingers glad obey,
And, harmoniz'd, a sprightly prelude play:
But when he join'd the music of his tongue,
These soft, sad elegiac lays he sung:

"All hail, thou care of Heaven! (a virtuous bard,
The god of wine, the muses, I regard);
But neither Bacchus, nor the Thespian nine,
The sacred will of destiny divine:
The secret book of destiny to see,
Heaven's awful sire has given alone to me;
And I, unerring god, to you explain
(Attend and credit) what the fates ordain.

"She who is still your ever constant care,
Dearer to you than sons to mothers are,
Whose beauties bloom in every soften'd line,
Her sex's envy, and the love of thine:
Not with more warmth is female fondness mov'd,
Not with more warmth are tenderest brides belov'd.
For whom you hourly importune the sky,
For whom you wish to live, nor fear to die,
Whose form, when night has wrap'd in black the pole,
Cheats in soft vision your enamour'd soul:
Neæra! whose bright charms your verse displays,
Seeks a new lover, and inconstant strays!
For thee no more with mutual warmth she burns,
But thy chaste house, and chaste embrace, she spurns.

"O cruel, perjur'd, false, intriguing sex!
O born with woes, poor wretched man to vex!
Whoe'er has learn'd her lover to betray,
Her beauty perish, and her name decay!

"Yet, as the sex will change, avoid despair;
A patient homage may subdue the fair.
Fierce love taught man to suffer, laugh at pain;
Fierce love taught man, with joy, to drag the chain;
Fierce love (nor vainly fabulous the tale)
Forc'd me, yes forc'd me, to the lonely dale:
There I Admetus' snowy heifers drove,
Nor tun'd my lyre, nor sung, absorb'd in love.
The favourite son of Heaven's almighty sire
Prefer'd a straw-pipe to his golden lyre.

"Though false the fair, though love is wild, obey;
Or, youth! you know not love's tyrannic sway.

In plaintive strains address the haughty fair;
The haughty soften at the voice of prayer.
If ever true my Delphian answers prove,
Bear this my message to the maid you love:
"Pride of your sex, and passion of the age!
No more let other men your love engage;
A bard on you the Delian god bestows,
This match alone can warrant your repose."
He sung. When Morpheus from my pillow flew,
And plung'd me in substantial griefs anew.
Ah! who could think that thou hadst broke thy vows,
That thou, Neæra! sought'st another spouse?
Such horrid crimes, as all mankind detest,
Could they, how could they, harbour in thy breast?
The ruthless deep, I know, was not thy sire;
Nor fierce chimæra, belching floods of fire;
Nor didst thou from the triple monster spring,
Round whom a coil of kindred serpents cling;
Thou art not of the Lybian lions' seed,
Of barking Scylla's, nor Charybdis' breed:
Nor Afric's sands, nor Scythia gave thee birth;
But a compassionate, benignant earth.
No: thou, my fair! deriv'st thy noble race
From parents deck'd with every human grace.[1]
Ye gods! avert the woes that haunt my mind,
And give the cruel phantoms to the wind.

ELEGY V

While you[2] at Tuscan baths for pleasure stay,
(Too hot when Sirius darts his sultry ray,
Though now the purple spring adorns the trees,
Not Baia's[3] more medicinal than these,)

[1] Tibullus here very cannily ingratiates himself with the father and mother of his beloved.

[2] Unknown friends of the poet.

[3] Baia was the most remarkable warm bath in Italy. The name of it came in time to stand for *thermæ* in general.

Me harder fates attend, my youth decays:
Yet spare, Persephone! my blameless days:
With secret wickedness unstung my soul;
I never mix'd nor gave the baneful bowl;
I ne'er the holy mysteries proclaim'd;
I fir'd no temple, and no god defam'd:
Age has not snow'd my jetty locks with white,
Nor bent my body, nor decay'd my sight:
(When both the consuls[1] fell, ah fatal morn!
Fatal to Roman freedom! I was born)
Apples unripe, what folly 'tis to pull,
Or crush the cluster ere the grapes are full!
  Ye gloomy gods! whom Acheron obeys,
Dispel my sickness, and prolong my days.
Ere to the shades my dreary steps I take,
Or ferry o'er the irremeable lake,
Let me (with age when wrinkled all my face)
Tell ancient stories to my listening race:
Thrice five long days and nights consum'd with fire,
(O soothe its rage!) I gradually expire:
While you the Naiad of your fountain praise,
Or lave, or spend in gentle sport your days:
Yet, O my friends! whate'er the Fates decree,
Joy guide your steps, and still remember me!
  Meantime, to deprecate the fierce disease,
And hasten glad returns of vigorous ease;
Milk, mix'd with wine, O promise to bestow,
And sable victims, on the gods below.[2]

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[1] Hirtius and Pansa were killed on the tenth of the calends of April, A.U.C. 710 (B.C. 43).

[2] Black cattle were the only victims sacrificed to the *dii inferni*.

ELEGY VI[1]

Lover

COME, Bacchus, come! so may the mystic vine
And verdant ivy round thy temples twine!
My pains, the anguish I endure, remove:
Oft hast thou vanquish'd the fierce pangs of love.
Haste, boy; with old Falernian crown the bowl;
In the gay cordial let me drench my soul.
Hence, gloomy care! I give you to the wind:
The god of fancy frolics in my mind.
My dear companions! favour my design;
Let's drown our senses all in rosy wine!

Companion

Those may the fair with practis'd guile abuse,
Who, sourly wise, the gay dispute refuse:
The jolly god can cheerfulness impart,
Enlarge the soul, and pour out all the heart.

Lover

But Love the monsters of the wood can tame,
The wildest tigers own the powerful flame:
He bends the stubborn to his awful sway,
And melts insensibility away:
So wide the reign of Love!

Companion

Wine, wine, dear boy!
Can any here in empty goblets joy?
No, no; the god can never disapprove,
That those who praise him should a bumper love.

---

[1] This poem, which is one continued struggle between the powers of love and wine, but in which the latter triumphs over the former, the translator has thrown into a dialogue between the lover and one of his boon companions.

What terrors arm his brow? the goblet drain:
To be too sober is to be profane!
Her son, who mock'd his rites, Agave tore,[1]
And furious scatter'd round the yelling shore.
Such fears be far from us, dread god of wine!
Thy rites we honour, we are wholly thine.
But let the sober wretch thy vengeance prove:

Lover

Or her whom all my sufferings cannot move!
—What pray'd I rashly for? my madding prayer,
Ye winds, disperse, unratified, in air:
For though, my love! I'm blotted from your soul,
Serenely rise your days, serenely roll!

Companion

The lovesick struggle past, again be gay:
Come crown'd with roses, let's drink down the day!

Lover

Ah me! loud-laughing mirth how hard to feign!
When doom'd a victim to love's dreadful pain.
How forc'd the drunken catch, the smiling jest,
When black solicitude annoys the breast!

Companion

Complaints, away! the blithsome god of wine
Abhors to hear his genuine votaries whine.

. . . . .

Lover

You, Ariadne! on a coast unknown,
The perjur'd Theseus wept, and wept alone;

[1] Penthus, King of Thebes, was torn in pieces by his mother and the other Mænades, for having ridiculed the newly-introduced orgies of Bacchus. See Ovid, Met. lib. III., and Theocritus, Idyll. XXVI.

But learn'd Catullus, in immortal strains,
Has sung his baseness, and has wept your pains.

. . . .
. . . . .

Companion

Thrice happy they, who hear experience call,
And shun the precipice where others fall.
When the fair clasps you to her breast, beware,
Nor trust her, by her eyes although she swear;
Not though, to drive suspicion from your breast,
Or love's soft queen, or Juno she attest:
No truth the women know; their looks are lies.

Lover

Yet Jove connives at amorous perjuries.
Hence, serious thoughts! then why do I complain?
The fair are licens'd by the gods to feign.
Yet would the guardian-powers of gentle love,
This once indulgent to my wishes prove,
Each day we then should laugh, and talk, and toy;
And pass each night in Hymeneal joy.
O yet my passion fix thy faithless heart!
For still I love thee, faithless as thou art.
Bacchus the Naiad loves;[1] then haste, my boy!
My wine to temper cooler streams employ.
What though the smiling board Neæra flies,
And in a rival's arms perfidious lies;
The live-long night, all sleepless, must I whine?
Not I—

Companion

Quick, servants! bring us stronger wine.

---

[1] Bacchus was brought up by the nymphs; which, says Vulpius, is a poetical figment, signifying that wine ought to be mixed with water.

Lover

Now Syrian odours scent the festal room,
Let rosy garlands on our foreheads bloom.

ELEGY VII

To you my tongue eternal fealty swore,
My lips the deed with conscious rapture own;
A fickle libertine I rove no more,
You only please, and lovely seem alone.

The numerous beauties that gay Rome can boast,
With you compar'd, are ugliness at best;
On me their bloom and practis'd smiles are lost,
Drive then, my fair! suspicion from your breast.

Ah, no! suspicion is the test of love:
I too dread rivals, I'm suspicious grown;
Your charms the most insensate heart must move:
Would you were beauteous in my eyes alone!

I want not man to envy my sweet fate,
I little care that others think me bless'd;
Of happy conquests let the coxcomb prate!
Vain-glorious vaunts the silent wise detest.

Supremely pleas'd with you, my heavenly fair!
In any trackless desert I could dwell;
From our recess your smiles would banish care,
Your eyes give lustre to the midnight cell.

For various converse I should long no more,
The blithe, the moral, witty, and severe;
Its various arts are her's whom I adore:
She can depress, exalt, instruct, and cheer.

Should mighty Jove send down from heaven a maid,
With Venus' cestus zon'd, my faith to try;
(So, as I truth declare, me Juno aid!)
For you I'd scorn the charmer of the sky.

But hold:—you're mad to vow, unthinking fool!
Her boundless sway you're mad to let her know:
Safe from alarms, she'll treat you as a tool—
Ah, babbling tongue! from thee what mischiefs flow.

Yet let her use me with neglect, disdain;
In all, subservient to her will I'll prove:
Whate'er I feel, her slave I'll still remain,
Who shrinks from sorrow cannot be in love!

Imperial queen of bliss! with fetters bound,
I'll sit me down before your holy fane;
You kindly heal the constant lover's wound,
The' inconstant torture with increase of pain.

BOOK IV

[POEMS OF SULPICIA?]

Some of the best modern commentators contend, that the little poems which compose this fourth book, are not the work of Tibullus. Their chief arguments are derived from the language and sentiment; in both which, it is said (and with more justice than is common on such occasions), that they bear no resemblance to our poet's productions.

But if the following little pieces are not the composition of Tibullus, to whom shall we impute them? Shall we, with Caspar Barthius and Broekhusius, ascribe them to Sulpicia, the wife of Calenus, who flourished in the reign of Domitian? This opinion is by no means improbable; for we know from Martial and Sidonius Apolinaris, that Sulpicia was eminent in those days for her poetry.

But if the fourth book was composed by Sulpicia, how comes it (objects Vulpius) to be found in all the ancient MSS. of Tibullus? To this it may be answered, that the old librarians used commonly,

in order to enhance the price of their MSS., to join to an author, who had not left many works behind him, any writer who composed in what they thought a similar taste. By this means, a satire, which our Sulpicia certainly wrote, was long ascribed by some to Juvenal, and by others to Ausonius, from having been found in the MS. works of those two poets; till some critics of more understanding [Scaliger, etc.] proved to the learned, neither Juvenal, nor Ausonius, but Martial's Sulpicia wrote it. [This Satire is given in volume three.]

The reader must determine the question for himself. But if the translator might be permitted to pronounce on the subject, he would say, that if any weight might be laid on difference of style, and especially of thought, the following poems cannot be the work of Tibullus:—but whether Martial's Sulpicia, or who else wrote them, is not in his power to determine.

POEM I

Great god of war! Sulpicia, lovely maid,
To grace your calends, is in pomp array'd.
If beauty warms you, quit the' ethereal height,
E'en Cytherea will indulge the sight:
But while you gaze o'er all her matchless charms,
Beware your hands should meanly drop your arms!
When Cupid would the gods with love surprise,
He lights his torches at her radiant eyes.
A secret grace her every act improves,
And pleasing follows wheresoe'er she moves.
If loose her hair upon her bosom plays,
Unnumbered charms that negligence betrays;
Or if 'tis plaited with a labour'd care,
Alike the labour'd plaits become the fair.
Whether rich Tyrian robes her charms invest,
Or all in snowy white the nymph is drest,
All, all she graces, still supremely fair,
Still charms spectators with a fond despair.
A thousand dresses thus Vertumnus wears,
And beauteous equally in each appears.
The richest tints and deepest Tyrian hue,
To thee, O wondrous maid! are solely due:

To thee the' Arabian husbandman should bring
The spicy produce of his eastern spring:
Whatever gems the swarthly Indians boast,
Their shelly treasures, and their golden coast,
Alone thou merit'st: come, ye tuneful choir!
And come, bright Phœbus! with thy plausive lyre:
This solemn festival harmonious praise,
No theme so much deserves harmonious lays.

POEM II

WHETHER, fierce churning boars! in meads ye stray,
Or haunt the shady mountain's devious way,
Whet not your tusks; my lov'd Cerinthus [1] spare!
Know, Cupid! I consign him to your care.
What madness 'tis, shag'd trackless wilds to beat,
And wound, with pointed thorns, your tender feet.
O! why to savage beasts your charms oppose?
With toils and blood-hounds why their haunts enclose?
The lust of game decoys you far away:
Ye blood-hounds perish, and ye toils decay!
Yet, yet could I with lov'd Cerinthus rove
Through dreary desarts, and the thorny grove:
The cumbrous meshes on my shoulders bear,
And face the monsters with my barbed spear:
Could track the bounding stags through tainted grounds,
Beat up their cover, and unchain the hounds.
But most to spread our artful toils I'd joy,
For while we watch'd them, I could clasp the boy!
Then, as entranc'd in amorous bliss we lay,
Mix'd soul with soul, and melted all away:
Snar'd in our nets, the boar might safe retire,
And owe his safety to our mutual fire.
O! without me ne'er taste the joys of love;
But a chaste hunter in my absence prove.
And O! my boars the wanton fair destroy,
Who would Cerinthus to their arms decoy!

[1] A feigned name, applied only to a handsome youth.

Yet, yet I dread.—Be sports your father's care;
But you, all passion! to my arms repair!

POEM III

Come, Phœbus! with your loosely floating hair,
O soothe her torture, and restore the fair!
Come, quickly come! we supplicant implore,
Such charms your happy skill ne'er sav'd before!
Let not her frame, consumptive, pine away,
Her eyes grow languid, and her bloom decay;
Propitious come! and with you bring along
Each pain-subduing herb, and soothing song;
Or real ills, or whate'er ills we fear,
To ocean's furthest verge let torrents bear.
O! rack no more, with harsh, unkind delays,
The youth, who ceaseless for her safety prays;
'Twixt love and rage his tortur'd soul is torn;
And now he prays, now treats the gods with scorn.
Take heart, fond youth! you have not vainly pray'd;
Still persevere to love the' enchanting maid:
Sulpicia is your own! for you she sighs,
And slights all other conquests of her eyes:
Dry then your tears; your tears would fitly flow
Did she on others her esteem bestow.
O come! what honour will be yours, to save
At once two lovers from the doleful grave?
Then both will, emulous, exalt your skill;
With grateful tablets, both your temples fill:
Both heap with spicy gums your sacred fire:
Both sing your praises to the' harmonious lyre:
Your brother gods will prize your healing powers,
Lament their attributes, and envy yours.

POEM IV

On my account, to grief a ceaseless prey,
Dost thou a sympathetic anguish prove?
I would not wish to live another day,
If my recovery did not charm my love:

For what were life, and health, and bloom to me,
Were they displeasing, beauteous youth! to thee?

POEM V

With feasts I'll ever grace the sacred morn,
When my Cerinthus, lovely youth, was born.
At birth, to you the' unerring sisters sung
Unbounded empire o'er the gay and young:
But I, chief I, (if you my love repay),
With rapture own your ever-pleasing sway.
This I conjure you, by your charming eyes,
Where love's soft god in wanton ambush lies:
This by your genius, and the joys we stole,
Whose sweet remembrance still enchants my soul.
Great natal genius! grant my heart's desire,
So shall I heap with costly gums your fire.
Whenever fancy paints me to the boy,
Let his breast pant with an impatient joy:
But if the libertine for others sigh,
(Which love forbid) O love! your aid deny.
Nor, love! be partial, let us both confess
The pleasing pain; or make my passion less.
But O! much rather 'tis my soul's desire,
That both may feel an equal, endless fire.
  In secret my Cerinthus begs the same,
But the youth blushes to confess his flame:
Assent, thou god! to whom his heart is known,
Whether he public ask, or secret own.

POEM VI

'Accept, O natal queen! with placent air,
The incense offer'd by the learned fair.
She's rob'd in cheerful pomp, O power divine!
She's rob'd to decorate your matron-shrine:—
Such her pretence; but well her lover knows
Whence her gay look, and whence her finery flows.
  Thou, who dost o'er the nuptial bed preside,
Oh! let not envious night their joys divide,

But make the bridegroom amorous as the bride!
So shall they tally, matchless lovely pair!
A youth all transport, and a melting fair!
Then let no spies their secret haunts explore,
Teach them thy wiles, O love! and guard the door.
  Assent, chaste queen! in purple pomp appear;
Thrice wine is pour'd, and cakes await you, here.
Her mother tells her for what boon to pray;
Her heart denies it, though her lips obey.
She burns, that altar as the flames devour;
She burns, and slights the safety in her power.
So may the boy, whose chains you proudly wear,
Through youth the soft indulgent anguish bear;
And when old age has chill'd his every vein,
The dear remembrance may he still retain!

POEM VII

At last the natal odious morn draws nigh,
  When to your cold, cold villa[1] I must go;
There, far, too far from my Cerinthus sigh:
  Oh why, Messala! will you plague me so?

Let studious mortals prize the silvan scene;
  And ancient maidens hide them in the shade;
Green trees perpetually give me the spleen;
  For crowds, for joy, for Rome, Sulpicia's made;

Your too officious kindness gives me pain.
  How fall the hailstones! hark! how howls the wind!
Then know, to grace your birth-day should I deign,
  My soul, my all, I leave at Rome behind.

POEM VIII

At last the fair's determin'd not to go:
  My lord! you know the whimsies of the sex.

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[1] Situated on a high hill (now Monte Ritondo).

Then let us gay carouse, let odours flow;
Your mind no longer with her absence vex.
For oh! consider, time incessant flies;
But every day's a birth-day to the wise!

POEM IX

That I, descended of Patrician race,
With charms of fortune, and with charms of face,
Am so indifferent grown to you of late,
So little car'd for, now excites no hate.
Rare taste, and worthy of a poet's brain;
To prey on garbage, and a slave adore!
In such to find out charms a bard must feign
Beyond what fiction ever feign'd of yore.
Her friends may think Sulpicia is disgrac'd;
No! no! she honours your transcendent taste.

POEM X

If from the bottom of my lovesick heart,
Of last night's coyness I do not repent;
May I no more your tender anguish hear,
No longer see you shed the' impassiond'd tear.
You grasp'd my knees, and yet to let you part—
O night more happy with Cerinthus spent!
My flame with coyness to conceal I thought,
But this concealment was too dearly bought.

POEM XI

Fame says, my mistress loves another swain;
Would I were deaf, when Fame repeats the wrong!
All crimes to her imputed, give me pain,
Not change my love: Fame, stop your saucy tongue!

POEM XII

Let other maids, whose eyes less prosperous prove,
Publish my weakness, and condemn my love:

Exult, my heart! at last the queen of joy,
Won by the music of her votary's strain,
Leads to the couch of bliss herself the boy,
And bids enjoyment thrill in every vein:
Last night entranc'd in ecstasy we lay,
And chid the quick, too quick return of day!
But stop my hand! beware what loose you scrawl,
Lest into curious hands the billet fall.
No—the remembrance charms!—begone, grimace!
Matrons! be yours formality of face.
Know, with a youth of worth, the night I spent,
And cannot, cannot, for my soul repent!

THE ELEGIES OF PROPERTIUS

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE BY

SIR CHARLES ABRAHAM ELTON

WITH A LIFE OF PROPERTIUS

BY THE SAME

INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF PROPERTIUS

THE general opinion of the birth-place of Sextus Aurelius Propertius has been formed from a passage in the first elegy of the fourth book on Rome: where he supposes himself addressed by an astrologer, who dissuades him from the higher walk of historic poetry.

> Thy seat is ancient Umbria: do I feign?
> Or touch I not upon thy native plain?
> Where dank Mevania drips with hollow vale,
> And Umber's lake feels warm the summer gale;
> Where on a rising cliff ascends the town,
> That from thy genius borrows its renown.

Scaliger, however, was of opinion, that the Mevania of the above passage was not a town, but tract of country: and thought the place meant was Ameria. The dispute has been agitated between no fewer than nine cities: so that Propertius has, in this respect, received a higher compliment than Homer. But at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Thaddæus Donnola, in his "Dissertationes de Patriâ Propertii," argued in favour of Hispellum, now Spello, also in Umbria; and the sagacity of his conjecture has been confirmed by a singular discovery. In 1722, some workmen who were employed by a lady of the name of Theresa Pamphylia, to make some alterations in her villa at Spello, dug up a flint-stone tablet, with this inscription in antique letters: "Sextus Aurelius Propertius, son of Sextus, Lemonian tribe:" above the inscription is the sculpture of a head, with flowing hair, and above this again, at the top of the stone, is the name of "Lucius Cominius, son of Lucius, Lemonian tribe." The latter inscription is in more recent characters than the name of Propertius, and the probability is that Cominius succeeded to the villa, which

had been that of Propertius, and engraved his name over that of the former owner.

There is a spot planted with olive-trees, near the gate of St. Barbara, or the Mountain, in the suburbs of Spello, which has been known from time immemorial by the name of "The Poet:" and tradition has placed here the villa of Propertius: of which some bricks, still remaining in the ground, are pointed out as the ruins. A Latin inscription is found on the same spot, to the following effect:

> Stranger! behold Propertius' fields appear:
> The rising cliff, the poet's name, are here.

From this spot the stone tablet had been, in all probability, removed to the place, where it was found.

The father of Propertius was a Roman knight, who served with Lucius Antonius: and it has been usually thought that he was one of the garrison of Perusium, who, according to Suetonius, were massacred after their surrender by order of Octavius, at an altar erected to Cæsar. Appian, however, relates that they were the senators of Perusium only, with some few of his more inveterate enemies, whom Octavius put to death; and that he was urged to this by the importunity of his own army, who made a special exception in favour of the soldiery. Propertius indeed mentions having buried his father at an untimely age; but the words "thou didst gather his bones" seem to imply that he buried him in peace. His estates were curtailed by the division of the lands among the veterans.

The poet informs us that he had scarcely assumed the manly gown, when he wrote verses; and that he preferred this occupation to the oratory of the bar. It appears from his own account that he visited Athens, the fashionable resort of well-educated Romans; and his style bears evident traces of his fondness for the Greek language and poesy. His residence at Rome was on the Esquiline hill. We learn from Apuleius, that the real name of his mistress, Cynthia, was Hostia, the daughter of Hostius, who wrote a poem on the "Istrian War." She was dissolute and luxurious, but accomplished: an elegant dancer; of a critical taste, and herself a poetess. She

appears to have died before him: as in the seventh elegy, fourth book, beginning,

> Ghosts are not air: not all with death expires,
> The lucid shade escapes the vanquished fires:

he supposes her apparition to visit her slumbers. He himself is said, I know not on what authority, to have died at the age of forty.

Propertius has been supposed by some critics to be the original of the prattling fop, described by Horace as pestering him through the streets [Sat. 9, l. 1].—

HORACE AND THE BORE

Sauntering down the Sacred Way
(My usual stroll) the other day,
Absorbed in personal affairs
And fancies trifling as my cares,
I met a chap (I knew the man
Only by name) who forward ran
And grabbed my hand: "Why, how d' y' do?
How is the world a-treating you?"
"As times go, fairly well," said I,
"Obliged, I'm sure. Fine day. Good-bye!"
But following after me he came,
Till I, to block his little game,
Growled, "Well, what is it?" gruff and surly.
Squelched? Not a bit. "You know me, surely!
Why, I'm a fellow *litterateur!*"
"I like you none the less, dear sir!"
I quickly say, and hurry on,
Horribly anxious to be gone.
Awhile I stride along, then stand,
Whisper a slave some faked command,
And swear,—the while the sweat I feel
Go trickling down from head to heel.
"O blessèd Bolanus," I said,
"With temper as thy top-not red!
Why was I cursed with spirit civil?"
The while the toady spewed his drivel,

And slimed the town with slavering tone
From pinnacle to paving stone.
To all his observations dumb,
I stalked along in silence glum,
Until at length he said: "I say,
You're mighty keen to get away.
For quite a while I've noticed it,
But you gain nothing,—not a bit!
I'll stick it out and follow through.
Where is this precious *rendezvous?*"
"A place where I must go alone;
I visit one to you unknown:
Across the Tiber sick he lies,
Near Cæsar's Gardens." He replies,
"I've nothing on and am not slow;
I'll toddle after where you go."
He'll tag along! O suffering Bacchus!
I drop my ears down as a jackass
That finds himself, already freighted
With ugly mood, by wares o'erweighted.
The bore begins: "If you would make
A good exchange, for me you'd shake
Viscus, your friend, or even Varius;
My talents are so multifarious.
Write? You can bet your life upon it!
You ought to see me sling a sonnet,
Or rattle off an epic. Sing?
Say, would you know the real thing,
Behold me warble like a linnet!
And dance? Hermogenes ain't in it!"
A chance to interrupt was here:
"Have you no kindred, parents dear,
Of whom you are the single stay?"
"Not one; all dead this many a day."
"Thrice happy folks; now, here I stand;
Finish the job! The hour's at hand
Of which, when yet a boy, an old
Sabellian witch of me foretold.
The scrolls were shaken; this unrolled:
Him shall no post-sent poison kill.
Billy nor sandbag work him ill.
No pains rheumatic, gout nor cough,
Nor patent nostrums bear him off;

A gabbler *shall, sometime, destroy*
Him utterly, so let the boy,
If wise, when grown to man's estate,
Shun every fool and rattle-pate."

When Vesta's shrine we reached at last
A quarter of the day had passed.
He was defendant in a case,
It seems, and here at justice' place
He needs must stop or jump his bail.
"You wouldn't see me go to jail?
It's only just a step aside—
Come, help me out!" And I replied:
"If I can stay or know a jot
Of civil law, may I be shot!
Must hurry on. Man sick, you know."
The fellow pondered. "Here's a go!
I hardly know the thing to do—
Which shall I leave—the case or you?"
"Me, please!" "No, that I won't," he said,
And then began to forge ahead.
I, as to strive with who wins
Is useless, follow. He begins:
"Stand in with old Mæcenas, eh?
A foxy man, as I should say,
To see the way he picks his friends;
No one has worked to better ends
Dame Fortune's purse strings! If you'd make
A friend at court, one who would take
A second place, why, here am I!
Just introduce me; may I die,
But you'd supplant 'em, one and all!"
"We live not at Mæcenas' hall
In such a wrangle. Search all Rome,
You cannot find a purer home,
Or happier; and," I reply,
"That he has chosen his friends,
Concerns me not, nor does it you.
Each has his place, and keeps it, too!"
"That beats my time; the thing you tell,
It has a rather fishy smell!"
"It's straight." "You're adding oil to fire,
Inflaming doubly my desire

To warm up to him as a friend."
"Your simple wish should win that end;
Such is your all-transcendent worth,
From his reserve 'twill draw him forth.
He's easy, but he knows it; so
He makes the first approaches slow."
"Trust me to manage that! With fees
His porter's hands I'll slyly grease,
Nor, if I am shut out one day,
Will I give up and go away.
I'll seek occasions, plan to greet
Him often on the public street
With all the people by to know it,
And see him home. What says the poet?
Life gave naught to mortals ever
But with strife and great endeavor.

He is still spouting when we come
On Fuscus, my particular chum;
A rascal rounder; knows the bore
Most beautifully. The greetings o'er,
That he may free me, I begin
To pinch his most unfeeling skin,
To nod, to nudge, to wink, to grin.
The wicked wag feigns with a smile
He doesn't see, and all the while
My liver boils with angry bile.
"I'm ready, Fuscus, now to chat
About the little business that——"
"To times less sacred, my dear sir,
My worldly matters I defer;
This is the thirtieth Sabbath Day!
Would you offend the Jews, I pray?"
"Religion doesn't bother me."
"But I'm rather weak, you see,
One of the common herd of men;
Beg pardon, but I'll talk again."
Woe worth the unpropitious day!
The heartless rascal slips away,
And, like a toad beneath the harrow,
I'm left to writhe in quarters narrow.
However, here we're overtaken
By plaintiff in the case forsaken,

Who, hot and angry, at us flies.
"You welcher!" to the bore he cries;
Then turns to me. "Will you appear
As witness?" I present my ear [1]
Right heartily. A fight's begun,
A mob collects to see the fun.
At last he's dragged to chancery,
And so Apollo rescued me.

Translated by M. M. M.

It is said that Horace has mentioned Tibullus; but it is strange he should not have mentioned Propertius also; that therefore he must have disliked him; that the fop made verses: therefore the fop could be no other than Propertius. Had Horace no friends or acquaintances but those whom he names in his writings? or could Rome produce but one fop who wrote verses? To give substance to this shadowy possibility, we have an appeal to the works of Propertius, in proof of his boastful character. This is to lose sight of the ancient manners, and of the taste and style of Roman poetry itself. If Propertius call himself "the Roman Callimachus," Horace boasts that he is the "Prince of Æolic verse." Ovid is full of these boastings: yet we hear nothing of the arrogance of Ovid and Horace. There is indeed one circumstance which would seem to impeach the modesty of Propertius: he appears to claim the honour of having first introduced the elegy in Roman poetry: he speaks of treading a new path; and of culling the flowers of his verse from untrodden recesses of Helicon. Now Ovid would not have wronged the just fame of Propertius, for he speaks of their close intimacy: Trist. b. 4, el. 10.

To me Propertius would his flames recite:
Whose heart was mine by friendship's equal right:

Yet he distinctly ranks Tibullus as preceding Propertius in the chronological order of amatory poets:

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[1] The Roman legal summons was served by touching the ear.

Virgil I but beheld: and greedy fate
Denied Tibullus' friendship; wished too late:
He followed Gallus: next Propertius came:
The last was I: the fourth successive name.

The pretensions of originality are here, certainly, contradicted by such evidence of simple facts as must have appealed to the knowledge of every man in Rome; and it is but reasonable to ask, whether, if the contradiction were so easy, it is likely that Propertius would have risked the ridicule of the exposure? for though we are told, with sentimental pomp, that Tibullus repaid this unworthy attempt to rob him of the glory of invention with the silent disdain which it deserved, there is no shadow of proof of this: beyond what is less than a shadow, the omission of Tibullus of his name. Why Tibullus and Propertius ought, in the course of things, to have been bosom friends, and to have talked incessantly of each other, I can find no reason, except that these poets are usually bound together in one volume. The notion that Horace would naturally be the friend of Propertius, because he was the friend of Tibullus, seems to rest on no better foundation; and therefore I cannot see the necessity of the alternative, that they were at variance. Their acquaintance is probable, as they must have met at the levees and entertainments of their common patron Mecænas: but if the omission of the name of Propertius by Horace and Tibullus be a proof of their contempt for him, half the poets in Rome are in the same predicament.

I think the nature of the claim, preferred by Propertius, has been misunderstood. From his genius we may fairly conclude that he was not deficient in understanding; that he was respected at the Roman court is evident from the notice and encouragement of Mecænas; and it is plain that Ovid mentions his friendship, as something of which to be proud. As a gentleman, a scholar, and a man of sense, it is utterly incredible that he should have arrogated to himself the invention of the Latin elegy, in the face of all the wits of Rome, who had the elegies of Tibullus by heart, and would have laughed down his pretensions at the corner of every street. I am of opinion that Propertius alludes to his imitation of the Greek

elegiac poets; and that he claims only the merit of having introduced their style of elegy. He distinctly says, that he came from the fountain head, and taught the orgies of Greek poesy to the choir of Italian Muses. He frequently adverts to Callimachus and Philetas as his masters and inspirers; and we should probably find, were we in possession of their elegies, that he was their imitator, if not their translator. That the Romans did not consider translation as detracting from the praise of genius appears from the instance of the comedies of Terence, copied from Menander; and from the passages in Virgil's Æneid and Georgics, which are borrowed from Homer and Aratus.

Considered as a writer of amorous elegy, Propertius has not the unstudied easy elegance of Tibullus. His compositions have an air of labour and ostentatious erudition: he affects a close and obscure style; delights in Grecisms and remote terms; and clogs his subject by thick-sown allusions to the fables of heroic mythology. Yet, notwithstanding this appearance of art, a vehemence of feeling continually breaks out, which partakes strongly of the enthusiasm of true poetry; and his starts and transitions, though they have been blamed, without consideration, as irregularly digressive, naturally express the emotions of love. It is in the stormier moments of passion, in the pangs of jealousy, and the torments of despair, that the excellence of Propertius mostly consists: a vein of sarcasm and bitter irony runs through many of his elegies; and this is the cause, why his poems have more of spirit and variety than the smoother elegies of Tibullus. Compared generally as poets, the genius of Propertius is of a more lofty stamp than that of Tibullus. He has a greater depth of thought, and a higher reach of fancy. There are several hints in his poems of his having been urged by Mecænas to undertake an epic work. From the Elegy on Rome he appears to have contemplated a poem on the Roman Antiquities, sacred and profane: an intimation which was, probably, the origin of Ovid's Fasts or Festivals: in the same manner as the Epistolary Elegy, from Arethusa to Lycotas, was undoubtedly the forerunner of that poet's heroical and amatory epistles. Propertius, however, seems to have shrunk from any great undertaking, either from

diffidence or, more probably, indolence and a love of pleasure. That his natural genius was equal to higher attempts, the occasional sublimity of his sentiments will attest; but to judge from his usual strain of poetry, he was the slave of voluptuous and debasing habits: and it may be doubted whether he had sufficient solidity of reflection and constancy of application for a work which Milton speaks of, as "not to be realised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, like that, which flows at will from the pen of some vulgar amourist."

THE ELEGIES OF PROPERTIUS

TO TULLUS

Cynthia's ensnaring eyes my bondage tied:
Ah wretch! no loves, till then, had touched my breast:
Love bent to earth these looks of steadfast pride,
And on my neck his foot triumphant pressed.

He taught me, then, to loathe the virtuous fair,
And shameless waste my wild and driftless hours:
Twelve moons this madness lasts; and yet my prayer
Is breathed in hopeless love to adverse powers.

Minalion, erst, could all adventures brave,
Till Atalanta's barbarous heart grew mild:
Love-crazed he trod each drear Parthenian cave,
And looked on shaggy beasts in forests wild.

Struck by the branch the monstrous Centaur swayed,
Midst shrill Arcadia's rocks he groaning fell;
And thus he tamed the nimble-footed maid;
Thus love-prayers speed, and acts that merit well.

In me no arts can tardy Love devise;
His foot can track no more the beaten ways:
Come ye! that draw the moon from charmèd skies!
That bid the hearth in magic orgies blaze!

Come! turn a haughty mistress' marble heart,
And change her cheek, still paler than my own:
Then will I trust, that stars obey your art,
And rivers rush, by muttered verse alone.

Friends! that too late my sliding feet recall,
Some antidote to this my frenzy bear:
Bring steel; bring flames and racks: I brave them all:
But let me freely vent my fierce despair.

Oh snatch me to the world's remotest shore!
Oh waft me o'er the immeasurable main!
Where never woman may behold me more,
Nor trace my way, to sting with her disdain!

Stay ye, to whom the listening God consents;
Safe in an equal yoke of fondness move;
But Venus all my bitter nights torments:
No—not a single hour is free from love.

Beware my sufferings: hold the mistress dear
Whose faith is tried, nor shift the accustomed sway:
If to my voice ye bend a slothful ear,
What pangs shall my remembered words convey!

TO A FRIEND

Why ceaselessly my fancied sloth upbraid,
As still at conscious Rome my love delayed?
Wide as the Po from Hypanis is spread
The distance that divides her from my bed.
No more with fondling arms she folds me round,
Nor in my ear her dulcet whispers sound.
Once I was dear: nor e'er could lover burn
With such a tender and a true return.
Yes—I was envied—hath some God above
Crushed me? or magic herb, that severs love,
Gathered on Caucasus, bewitched my flame?
Nymphs change by distance: I'm no more the same.
Oh what a love has fleeted like the wind,
And left no vestige of its trace behind!
Now sad I count the lingering nights alone
And my own ears are startled by my groan.

Happy! the youth who weeps, his mistress nigh;
Love with such tears has mingled ecstasy:
Blest, who, when scorned, can change his passing heat;
The pleasures of translated bonds are sweet.
I can no other love: nor hence depart:
For Cynthia, first and last, is mistress of my heart.

ON HIMSELF

Ah! thou, that vaunted'st, nought could harm thy breast,
Art caught: that haughty spirit crouches tame:
Scarce one short month art thou content to rest,
And lo! another love-book speaks thy shame.

Late I was free: my sleep without a thorn:
In widowed bed, and single quiet laid:
I trusted to the peace which Love had sworn,
But false and hollow was the truce he made.

I sought if fishes on the sands might live,
Or the wild boar through seas accustomed stray:
If wakeful studies might abstraction give:
Love, though deferred, is never chased away.

As from his neck the bull shakes fierce the plough;
But soon bends mildly to the wonted yoke:
Young lovers blustering chafe; but humbled bow;
And tamely bear each light and heavy stroke.

Inglorious chains Melampus patient took,
Who stole from Iphiclus his herds away:
Not gain compelled, but Pero's lovely look:
Thus in his brother's arms a bride she lay.

Twas not her face, though fair, that caught my sight;
Less fair the lily's bell: as Scythian snows
Should blend Ebro's red their virgin white,
Or in pure cream as floats the scattered rose:

Not tresses, that enringed in crispèd twine,
Flow loose with their accustomed careless art
Down her smooth marble neck; nor eyes that shine
Torches of passion: load-stars of my heart:

Not that through silken folds of Araby
The nymph's fine limbs with lucid motion gleam:
(For no ideal beauties heaves my sigh
Nor airy nothings prompt my amorous dream:)

Not all so charms, as when aside she lays
The mantling cup, and glides before my view:
Graceful as Ariadne through the maze
Of choral dance with Bacchic revellers flew:

Or when inspired by Aganippe's stream,
O'er Sappho's lyre with sportive touch she strays;
And challenges Corinna's ancient theme,
And coldly listens to Erinne's lays.

When first, sweet soul! you saw the light of Heaven
Did love with clear, shrill-echoed omen sneeze?
The Gods have all thy rare endowments given:
The Gods have given, nor from thy mother these.

Not these the fruit of merely human birth,
Nor ten short moons matured thy every grace:
Thou art the glory of our Roman earth,
A bride for Jove, the first of Roman race:

Not always on my mortal couch to lie:
A second Helen treads this earthly ball:
What wonder, that our youth in ardour sigh?
For her, oh Troy! more splendid were thy fall.

I once admired, that for a woman's eyes
Round Ilium's ramparts Europe, Asia, strove:
Wise Paris was, and Menelaus wise:
Who claimed, and who refused, the cause of love.

But hers are charms that might Achilles bend,
Might warm old Priam, and might sanction war;
Hers ancient painting's breathing forms transcend:
To all of pictured fame superior far.

To west and east her blooming portrait show,
Both east and west she shall inflame with love:
Why tarries she in human form below?
Thy ancient gallantries I pardon, Jove!

Yellow her hair; her shapely hands are long;
Tall her fine form, and Juno-like she treads:
So Pallas walks Dulichian shrines among,
While her broad breast the snaky mail o'erspreads.

Such as Ischomache, the heroine-bride,
When rape of wine-flushed Centaurs dared her charms:
Such virgin Brimo, nothing loth, beside
Bebœis' fountain, sank in Hermes' arms.

Yield Goddesses! whom erst the shepherd saw
Disrobe your limbs in Ida's mountain-glade:
May never age its lines transforming draw,
Through hers the lustres of the Sybil Maid.

TO CYNTHIA

Then wide through Rome—and is it, Cynthia, true?
Thy name is blown; thy wanton actions fly:
Looked I for this?—this, traitress! thou shalt rue;
The northern wind shall teach me constancy.

One, whom thy sex's treachery less inspires,
I'll seek; who from my song will covet fame;
Whose shamelessness will not insult my fires;
Whose nimble tongue shall scandalize thy name.

Oh long beloved! too late thy tears will flow!
Now fresh my fury; let me now depart;

When anger cools, alas! too well I know,
Love will resume its influence o'er my heart.

Not so the north-wind turns Carpathian tides,
Nor blackening clouds the veering south obey;
As, at a word, the lover soothed subsides;
Loose, then, the unequal yoke, while yet we may.

And thou, not wholly from compunction free,
Wilt somewhat grieve; but only on the night
When thy late lover first is missed by thee;
All ills of love become, by patience, light.

But oh! by Juno's dear, protecting name,
Harm not thyself, nor give these passions rein;
Not the horned bull, alone, will wrongs inflame;
E'en the mild sheep, if injured, turns again.

I will not from thy perjured bosom tear
The vest away; thy bolted chamber storm;
Pluck with infuriate grasp thy braided hair,
Nor with hard nails thy tender cheeks deform;

Thus let the rustic churl his anger show;
To such these base revenges I resign;
For whom no garlands of the Muses grow,
Round whose rude brow no ivy tendrils twine;

But I will write—what thou wouldst blot in vain:
O Cynthia—Cynthia, beautiful, and frail:
Fame's busy murmurs thou may'st still disdain,
Yet this my verse shall dye thy cheek with pale!

TO CYNTHIA

Not such Corinthian Lais' sighing train
Before whose gates all prostrate Greece had lain:
Not such a crowd Menander's Thais drew,
Whose charms the Athenian people joyed to woo:

Nor she, who could the Theban towers rebuild,
When hosts of suitors had their coffers filled.
Nay—by false kinsmen are thy lips carest:
By sanctioned, simulated, kisses prest.
The forms of youth and beauteous Gods, that rise
Around thy pictured roof, offend mine eyes.
The tender lisping babe, by thee carest
Within its cradle, wounds my jealous breast.
I fear thy mother's kiss; thy sister dread;
Suspect the virgin partner of her bed:
All wakes my spleen; a very coward grown:
Forgive the fears, that spring from thee alone.
Wretched in jealous terror, to my eyes
Beneath each female robe a lover lies.
Blest was Admetus' spouse; and blest the dame
Who shared Ulysses' couch in modest fame:
Oh! ever happy shall the fair-one prove,
Who by her husband's threshold bounds her love.
Ah! why should Modesty's pure fane ascend:
Why at her shrine the blushing maiden bend:
If, when she weds, her passions spurn control:
If the bold matron sates her wishful soul?
The hand, that first in naked colours traced
Groups of loose loves, on walls that once were chaste:
And full exposed, broad burning on the light,
The shapes and postures that abash the sight;
Made artless minds in crime's refinements wise,
And flashed enlightening vice on virgin eyes.
Woe to the wretch! who thus insidious wove
Mute rapture's veil o'er wrath and tears of love!
Not thus the roofs were decked in olden time,
Nor the stained walls were painted with a crime:
Then, for some cause, the desert fanes of Rome
Wave with rank grass, while spiders veil the dome.
What guards, oh Cynthia! shall thy path confine?
What threshold bound that wilful foot of thine?
Weak is constraint, if women loth obey,
And she is safe, who, blushing, fears to stray.

ON A RIVAL

Twice ten long years Penelope was wooed,
Yet chaste remained, by countless lovers sued:
With fictious woof her wedlock could delay,
And rent by night the threads she wove by day:
Hopeless Ulysses to behold again,
Yet tarrying, saw her youthful beauties wane.
Briseis' arms the dead Achilles pressed;
With frantic hand she smote her snowy breast,
Mourning her bleeding lord; and, though a slave,
Washed his strained corse in Simois' shallower wave:
Soiled her fair locks; and in her slender hold
Culled from the pile those bones of giant mould:
No sire, no blue-haired mother of the sea,
Nor widowed Deidamia mourned for thee.
Then her true sons did Grecia's glory wield,
When modest love could bless the tented field.
Thou not a single night alone canst stay:
No—shameless woman! not a single day.
Now thy gay laugh midst circling goblets flies:
Myself, perchance, thy raillery's sacrifice.
E'en him thou seek'st, who late forsook thy charms:
Then, may the Gods consign him to thy arms!
But, when in tears we stood around thy bed;
When Styx had nigh o'erwhelmed thy sinking head;
When my fond vows were silent breathed for thee,
Where then, perfidious! where, and what was he?
Would'st thou for me thus fondly breathe the prayer,
Did I to farthest Ind the standard bear;
Or in mid-ocean were my galley placed,
A lonely speck amidst the watery waste?
Yes—words and smooth deceits are thine at will:
This task is easy to a woman still.
Not Afric's sands so fluctuate to the blast,
Or quivering leaves on wintry gales are cast;
As passion's gust bids woman's promise fly,
Be rage the cause, or be it levity.

Since 'tis thy pleasure, I no more contend:
Ye cruel Loves! yet keener arrows bend;
Right-aiming at my heart, dissolve my life;
My blood the palm of this your glorious strife.
And must thou, thus, Propertius! in the bloom
Of opening youth, descend into the tomb?
Must thou then die? yes, die—that she may view
Thy corse with smiles: they fleeting ghost pursue
With her tormenting scorn; disturb thee dead;
Leap on thy pyre, and on thy ashes tread.
What? did not Hæmon on his bloody glaive
Fall, by Antigone's untimely grave;
And mix his ashes in the maiden's urn,
Nor would, without her, to his Thebes return?
Thou shalt not scape: yes, thou my death shalt feel:
Our mingled blood shall trickle from the steel.
Yes—though thy death to ages brand my name,
That death shall reach thee, and I brave the shame.
Witness the stars! the dews of morning's hour!
The stealthy door, which opened to thy bower:
That naught in life more precious was to me,
And still I love thee: yes, in spite of thee!
No other nymph shall on my couch recline
Alone and loveless, since no longer thine.
Ah! if my life some virtuous years have known,
May he thy arms enfold be turned to stone!
Not with some horrid zest and thirst of blood,
Thebes' princes fought, while near their mother stood:
Than I, if Cynthia's presence fired the strife,
Would yield my own to snatch my rival's life.

TO CYNTHIA

Be praised by others, or unknown remain:
Who sings thy praise will sow a barren plain.
The funeral couch, that last, that gloomy day,
Shall bear those offerings, with thyself, away:
The traveller o'er thy slighted bones shall tread
With heedless foot, unconscious of the dead;

Nor, lingering at thy nameless grave, declare,
" This heap of dust was an accomplished fair."

EFFIGY OF LOVE

Had he not hands of rare device, whoe'er
First painted Love in figure of a boy?
He saw what thoughtless beings lovers were,
Who blessings lose, whilst lightest cares employ.

Nor added he those airy wings in vain,
And bade through human hearts the godhead fly;
For we are tost upon a wavering main;
Our gale, inconstant, veers around the sky.

Nor, without cause, he grasps those barbèd darts,
The Cretan quiver o'er his shoulder cast;
Ere we suspect a foe, he strikes our hearts;
And those inflicted wounds for ever last.

In me are fixed those arrows, in my breast;
But sure his wings are shorn, the boy remains;
For never takes he flight, nor knows he rest;
Still, still I feel him warring through my veins.

In these scorched vitals dost thou joy to dwell?
Oh shame! to others let thy arrows flee;
Let veins untouched with all thy venom swell;
Not me thou torturest, but the shade of me.

Destroy me—who shall then describe the fair?
This my light Muse to thee high glory brings:
When the nymph's tapering fingers, flowing hair,
And eyes of jet, and gliding feet she sings.

ON HIS POETRY

Fewer the Persic darts in Susa's bands
Than in my breast those arrows sheathed by Love:

He not to scorn the tender Muse commands,
And bids my dwelling be the Ascræan grove.

Not that Pierian oaks may seek my lyre,
Nor savage beasts from vales Ismarian throng;
But that my Cynthia may the strain admire,
And I than Linus rise more famed in song.

Not an engaging form so charms mine eye;
Not so the fair one's noble lineage moves;
As on the accomplished nymph's soft breast to lie,
And read what she with chastened ear approves.

Be this my lot, and henceforth I despise
The mingled babblings of the vulgar throng:
What are to me e'en Jove's dread enmities,
If she appeased relent, and love my song?

TO CYNTHIA

Then, soon as night o'ershades my dying eyes,
Hear my last charge: let no procession trail
Its lengthened pomp, to grace my obsequies,
No trump with empty moan my fate bewail.

Let not the ivory stand my bier sustain,
Nor on embroidered vests my corse recline;
Nor odour-breathing censers crowd the train:
The poor-man's mean solemnities be mine.

Enough of state—enough, if of my verse
Three slender rolls be borne with pious care:
No greater gift, attendant on my hearse,
Can soothe the breast of hell's imperial fair.

But thou, slow-following, beat thy naked breast,
Nor weary faint with calling on the dead:
Be thy last kisses to my cold lips prest,
While alabaster vases unguents shed.

When flames the pyre, and I am embers made,
My relics to an earthen shell convey:
Then plant a laurel, which the tomb may shade,
Where my quenched ashes rest, and grave the lay:

"What here a heap of shapeless ashes lies,
Was once the faithful slave of Love alone:"
Then shall my sepulchre renowned arise
As the betrothed Achilles' blood-stained stone.

And thou, whene'er thou yieldest thus to fate,
Oh dear one! seek the memorable way
Already trod; the mindful stones await
Thy second coming, and for thee they stay.

Meantime, whilst life endures, oh, warned beware
Lest thou the buried lover should'st despise:
Some conscious spark e'en mouldering ashes share:
The senseless clay is touched by injuries.

Ah! would some kinder Fate while yet I lay
In cradled sleep, had bid me breathe my last!
What boots the breath of our precarious day?
Nestor is dead, his three long ages past.

On Ilium's rampart had the Phrygian spear
Abridged his age, and sent a swifter doom:
He ne'er had seen his sons' untimely bier,
Nor cried, "Oh death! why art thou slow to come?"

Thou thy lost friend shalt many a time deplore;
And love may ever last for those who die:
Witness Adonis, when the ruthless boar
Smote in the Idalian brake his snowy thigh:

'Tis said, that Venus wept her lover lost,
Trod the dank soil, and spread her streaming hair:
Thou too in vain would'st call upon my ghost:
These mouldered bones are dumb to thy despair.

ON VENAL INFIDELITY

The Prætor from Illyria comes again:
Thy spoil and prey; my torment and my bane:
Could not Ceraunian rocks his barks have wrecked?
What gifts, oh Neptune! had thy altars decked!
Now is thy table filled; thy midnight door
Left soft ajar; but ah! for me no more.
Yes—now if wise, the inviting harvest reap;
Fleece with no sparing hand the silly sheep:
Then, when his gifts run dry command him sail
To new Illyrias with a prosperous gale.
No wreathes, no fasces draw my Cynthia's gaze;
But evermore her lover's purse she weighs.
Aid, Venus! aid my anguish! quick—dispense
The unnerving plagues of blasting impotence!
Then bartered gifts can now a mistress move?
For gifts, oh Jupiter! she pines in love.
For lucid gems she sends me o'er the main,
And bids me seek in Tyre the purple grain:
Oh that in Rome no lords of wealth we saw;
That e'en the palace-roof were thatched with straw!
No venal mistress then would melt to gold:
Beneath one roof the bride would then grow old.
Not that seven nights, while I apart recline,
The snowy arms round that vile reptile twine:
Not bear me witness, am I wroth with thee:
I curse the fair's proverbial levity.
A stranger tracks the traces of my kiss,
And sudden blest usurps my throne of bliss.
Ah! Eriphyle's bitter gifts survey!
On Jason's bride see fiery torments prey!
Can then no wrongs forbid my tears to flow,
Nor I the vice forsake, that feel the woe?
Whole days have fled; nor longer Mars's field,
The theatre, the Muse, delight can yield:
Shame! where is now thy blush? but ah! I fear
That a disgraceful passion cannot hear.

Look on the chief, who late with treason's host
Raised empty uproar on the Actian coast:
Love ignominious turned his flying prores,
And drove him to the world's remotest shores:
Augustus' brow a double glory wreathes:
The hand that conquered now the falchion sheathes.
Oh! may those robes, those emeralds which he gave,
Be snatched by storms through air or o'er the wave:
Those chrysolites, that gleam with yellow light,
Be turned to earth and water in thy sight!
Not always Jove whom perjured lovers swear
Complacent laughs, nor deaf rejects the prayer.
Heard'st thou yon roll of thunder, muttering deep?
Sawest thou from ether's vault the light'nings leap?
No Pleiads—no Orion's clouds are here;
Nor casual falls the fiery atmosphere.
On nymphs forsworn wrath lightens from above,
For e'en the God has wept, betrayed in love.
Is Sidon's crimson garment still thy care?
But tremble, false one! at the darkened air!

TO CYNTHIA, WHEN IN THE COUNTRY

Though, with unwilling eyes, from Rome I see
  Thy mourned departure, my regretted love!
Yet I rejoice that, e'en remote from me,
  Thy feet the solitary woodlands rove.

In the chaste fields no soft seducer sighs
  With blandishments, that force thee to thy shame;
No wanton brawls before thy windows rise;
  Nor scared thy sleep with those that call thy name.

Thou art in solitude—and all around
  Lone hills, and herds, and humble cots appear;
No theatres can here thy virtue wound,
  No fanes, the cause of sin, corrupt thee here.

Thou shalt behold the steers the furrows turn;
The curved knife, dexterous, prune the foliaged vine;
Thy grains of incense in rude chapel burn,
And see the goat fall at a rustic shrine;

Or, with bare leg, the rural dance essay,
But safe from each strange lover's prying sight:
And I will seek the chase: alternate pay
To Venus vows, and join Diana's rite.

Chide the bold hound; in woodland covert lie,
And hang the antlered spoil on pine-tree boughs;
But no huge lion in his lair defy,
Nor savage boar, with nimble onset, rouse.

My prowess be to seize the timid hare,
Or from my reedy quiver pierce the bird;
Nigh where Clitumnus winds his waters fair
Through arching trees, and laves the snow-white herd.

Whate'er thy sports, remember, sweetest soul!
A few short days will bring me to thy side;
For not the lonely woods, the rills that roll
Down mossy crags in smooth, meandering tide,

Can so divert the jealousy of fear,
But that I name thee by some fancied name,
While earnest in thy praise; lest they, that hear,
Should seek thee absent, and seduce to shame.

DEFENCE OF INCONSTANCY

"Framest thou excuse, who art a tale to all?
Whose Cynthia long is read at every stall?"
These words might damp a deaf man's brow, and move
A candid blush for mean and nameless love.
But did my Cynthia breathe a melting sigh,
I were not called the head of levity:

Nor broad town-scandal should traduce my fame:
Then would I speak, though branded thus by name.
Wonder not thou that meaner nymphs invite:
They less defame me: are the causes light?
She'll now a fan of peacock's plumes demand;
And now a crystal ball to cool her hand:
Tease me to death for ivory dice, and pray
For glittering baubles of the sacred way.
Ah! let me die if I regard the cost:
A jilting fair-one's mockery stings me most.
Was this the favour to transport my heart?
Thou feel'st no blush, thus charming as thou art:
Scarce two short nights in tender joys are sped,
And I am called intruder on thy bed.
Yet would'st thou praise my person: read my lay:
Has this thy love then flown so swift away?
The race of genius may my rival run:
But let him learn from me to love but one.
What! he forsooth will Lerna's snake enfold;
Snatch from the Hesperian dragon fruits of gold;
Drain poisonous juice; or shipwrecked gulp the sea;
And from no miseries shrink, for sake of thee?
Ah! would, my life! these tasks were proved in me!
Then should we find this gallant, now so proud,
Skulk his mean head among the coward crowd.
Let the vain braggart vaunt his puffed success:
One short year shall divorce your tenderness.
No Sibyl's years, Herculean toils avail,
Nor that last gloomy day to make my fondness fail.
Yes—thou shalt cull my bones, which tears bedew:
"Propertius! these were thine: ah tried and true!
Ah me! most true! though not through noble veins
Flowed thy rich blood, nor ample thy domains."
Yes—I will all endure: all wrongs are slight:
A beauteous woman makes the burthen light.
Many for thee, I well believe, have sighed;
But few of men in constancy are tried.
Brief time for Ariadne Theseus burned:
Demophoön from his Phillis ingrate turned:

In Jason's bark the sea Medea braved,
Yet, lone abandoned, cursed the man she saved:
Hard too the woman's heart, whose feigned desire
For many lovers fans the ready fire.
Not to the suitors, vain of noble race,
Not to the wealthy, yield thy bribed embrace:
Of these scarce one would shed a tear for thee,
Or near thy urn be found, as I shall be.
Yet rather thou for me, grant heaven! the prayer:
Smite on thy naked breast, and strew thy streaming hair.

ON HIS JEALOUSY OF A RIVAL

Oh lovely torment! for my anguish born,
Since oft excluded from thy door in scorn:
Come to these arms; my verse renown can give;
Here thou the fairest of thy sex shalt live:
Let not my boast Catullus' ear offend;
Let gentle Calvus too his pardon lend.
The veteran, gray with service, quits the field;
Their necks no more the age-worn oxen yield;
On the waste sands the mouldering barks remain,
And the cleft shield hangs idle in the fane.
Were it not better crouch, a tyrant's slave,
And in thy brazen bulls, Perillus! rave;
At Gorgon's visage stiffen into stone,
Or under Caucasus' keen vultures groan.
Still I persist: lo! rust can steel decay,
And gentle droppings wear the flint away.
Love to the marble threshold clings, nor feels
The wearing stone; though threatened, patient kneels;
Though wronged, pleads guilt; implores the foot that spurns;
And, loth returning, yet, when called, returns.
And thou, full-flushed with bliss! be taught from me,
Fond rival! woman's light inconstancy.
In the mid-storm who pays his thanks to heaven,
When oft, in port, the floating wreck is driven?
Who claims the prize, ere seven-times round the goal
With grazing wheel, the kindling chariot roll?

In love's fair sky fallacious breezes blow,
And heavy comes the storm, when threatening slow.
E'en though she love thee, be thy joy suppressed,
And lock the secret in thy silent breast.
The boastings of successful passion prove,
I know not how, injurious oft in love.
Go once, for many times that she invites;
Short is the bliss, which prying envy blights.
Oh, if the ages past could votaries find,
And if our nymphs were of that ancient kind,
What now thou art, should I, unrivalled, be;
The time's corruption hath supplanted me.
Not from this age my nature takes its hue;
Each has his path, and I my own pursue.
But thou, whose courtship thus promiscuous roves,
How must thine eyes be tortured by thy loves!
Thou seest the skin with lunar clearness white,
Thou seest the brown of tint, and both delight;
Charmed by the shape through Grecian robes displayed,
By vestures ravished of the Roman maid.
Be russet garments, or the purple, worn,
By both alike thy tender breast is torn.
One only nymph might well employ thy dreams;
One nymph variety of torment seems.

THE LOVER

Mortals! ye fain would search with curious eyes,
  Death's hovering hour, and ever-varied way;
Scan with Phœnician art the starlit skies,
  And, kind or adverse, read each planet's ray.

Britons our fleets, and Parths our legions, fear,
  Yet still blind perils haunt the earth and main;
Anxious ye rue the tumult thickening near,
  When Mars joins havoc on the dubious plain.

Ye dread, lest flames your crashing roofs devour,
  Or livid poison lurk within your bowl:

The lover only knows his fated hour;
Nor blasts, nor arms, give terror to his soul.

Though now on reedy Styx the oar he ply,
E'en now, the murky sail of Hell survey;
Let her he loves recall him with a sigh,
He shall retrace that unpermitted way.

TO CYNTHIA

As yesternight, my life! I roamed the street,
Flushed with the grape, no slave to guide my feet:
A tiny multitude of boys drew near:
I could not count them from my wildering fear.
Some torches shook; some brandished darts in air;
Some rattled chains; their rosy limbs were bare.
Till one, more petulant in mischief, cried,
"Seize, bind him; he is known to us, and tried:
'Tis he, marked out by an offended fair."
Instant my neck was noosed in knotted snare:
One shouts to drag me forth; another cries,
"Wretch! if he doubts that we are Gods, he dies.
For thee, all undeserving as thou art,
She wakeful counts the hours, that slow depart:
And still expectant sighs; while some strange fair
Attracts thee to her door: we know not where.
Fond fool! when, disentangled from her head
Her nightly turban's purple fillet's spread,
As, drooping with moist sleep, she lifts her eyes,
Such odours from her locks dishevelled rise,
As ne'er Arabia's breathing balms diffuse;
For Love's own hands extract those essenced dews.
But spare him, brothers! the repentant youth
Gives his free promise now of amorous truth:
And see, we reach the appointed house," he said;
Then my stript mantle o'er my shoulders spread,
And led me in: "Go now: no longer roam:
But learn from this to pass thy nights at home."

PREDICTION OF POETIC IMMORTALITY

Sprite of Callimachus! and thou blest shade,
Coan Philetas! I your grove would tread;
Me, Love's vowed priest, have Grecia's choirs obeyed,
From their pure fount in Latian orgies led.

Say, Spirits! what inspiriting grotto gave
Alike to both that subtly tender strain:
Which foot auspicious entered first the cave,
Or from what spring ye drank your flowing vein?

Who lists, may din with arms Apollo's ear:
Smooth let the numbers glide, whose fame on high
Lifts me from earth: behold my muse appear!
And on wreathed coursers pass in triumph by!

With me the little Loves the car ascend;
My chariot-wheels a throng of bards pursues;
Why, with loose reins, in idle strife contend?
Narrow the course which Heaven assigns the Muse.

Full many Rome shall bid thy annals shine,
And Asian Bactra rise thy empire's bound;
Mine are the lays of peace, and flowers are mine
Gathered on Helicon's untrodden ground.

Maids of the sacred fount! with no harsh crown,
But with soft garland wreathe your poet's head!
Those honours, which the invidious crowd disown
While yet I live, shall doubly grace me dead.

Whate'er the silent tomb has veiled in shade
Shines more august through venerable fame;
Time has the merits of the dead displayed,
And rescued from the dust a glorious name.

Who, else, would know, that e'er Troy-towers had bowed
To the pine-steed? that e'er Achilles strove
With grappling rivers? that round Ida flowed
The stream of Simois, cradling infant Jove?

If Hector's blood dyed thrice the wheel-tracked plain?
Polydamas, Deiphobus, once fell,
Or Helenus was numbered with the slain?
Scarce his own soil could of her Paris tell.

Shrunk were thy record, Troy! whose captured wall
Felt twice the Ætæan God's resistless rage:
Nor he, the bard that registered thy fall,
Had left his growing song to every age.

Me too shall Rome, among her last, revere;
But that far day shall on my ashes rise;
No stone a worthless sepulchre shall rear,
The mean memorial where a poet lies.

So may the Lycian God my vows approve!
Now let my verse its wonted sphere regain;
That, touched with sympathies of joy and love,
The melting nymph may listen to my strain.

'Tis sung that Orpheus, with his Thracian tones,
Stayed the wild herd, and stayed the troubled flood;
Moved by Amphion's lute Cythæron's stones
Leaped into form, and Thebes aspiring stood.

Beneath rude Ætna's crag, oh Polypheme!
On the smooth deep, did Galatea rein
Her horses, dropping with the briny stream,
And wind their course to catch thy floating strain.

Then, if the God of Verse, the God of wine,
Look down propitious, and with smiles approve;
What wonder, if the fair's applause be mine,
If thronging virgins list the lays of love?

Though no green marble, from Tænarian mines,
Swells in the columns that my roof uphold;
No ceiling's arch with burnished ivory shines,
And intersecting beams that blaze with gold;

My orchards vie not with Phœacian groves,
Through my carved grot no Marcian fountains play;
With me the Muse in breathless dances roves;
Nymphs haunt my dwelling; readers love my lay.

Oh fortunate, fair maid! whoe'er thou art,
That, in my gentle song, shall honoured be!
This to each charm shall lasting bloom impart;
Each tender verse a monument of thee!

The sumptuous pyramids, that stately rise
Among the stars, the Mausolean tomb,
The Olympic fane, expanded like the skies—
Not these can scape the irrevocable doom.

The force of rushing rains, or wasting flame,
The weight of years may bow their glories down;
But Genius wins an undecaying name,
Through ages strong, and deathless in renown.

THE DREAM OF PROPERTIUS

Methought I lay by Pegasus' fresh fount,
On pleasant Helicon's umbrageous mount:
The feats, oh Alba! of thy storied kings
Already trembled on my murmuring strings:
Venturous I stooped that mightier stream to sip,
Whence father Ennius slaked his thirsty lip;
The Curian and Horatian spears he sung;
The Æmilian bark with regal trophies hung;
Fabius' slow conquests; Cannæ's fatal plain;
And Heaven by pious offerings turned again:
Rome's Gods that forth the Punic spoiler drove,
And the shrill bird that saved the fane of Jove.

When, from a laurel by Castalia's wave,
Propt on his golden harp before a cave,
Apollo saw: he fixed his glance, and cried,
"What wouldst thou, madman! with so vast a tide?
Who bade thee thus heroic numbers claim?
Not hence, Propertius! hope the wreath of fame.
Rather with slender track thy chariot lead
To print the verdure of the velvet mead:
While careless on the couch thy page is thrown,
Where she, that waits a lover, sighs alone.
Why quit the ring that bounds thy lay's renown;
Or weigh the pinnace of thy genius down?
One oar the sea and one the sand should sweep:
Be safe, for stormiest rolls the midmost deep."
Then with his ivory quill he showed a seat,
And path of springing moss, by foot unbeat:
Studding the grot, stones green with lichens clung;
And timbrels from the rock's worn vault were hung:
Silenus old with clay-formed Muses stood;
And piping Pan from his Arcadian wood:
My darling doves, light-hovering round their Queen,
Dipped their red beaks in rills from Hippocrene.
The sculptured Sisters, ranged on either side,
In various tasks their yielding fingers plied:
This culls for Bacchic spears the ivy sprays;
That tunes the stringèd lyre, and sets the lays:
Another's hands the braided garland bind
With roses, white and red, alternate twined.
One, rising from the group, drew near to me,
Her air, methought, bespoke Calliope:
"Let snow-plumed swans for ever waft thy car:
Nor steeds strong-thundering whirl thee to the war.
Blow not the dismal trumpet's hoarse alarms,
Nor stern beset the Aonian bowers with arms;
Bid not the Marian banners flout the sky;
From Rome's firm shock the broken Teutons fly;
Or barbarous Rhine along his wailing flood
Roll heaps of Suevian slain, and blush with blood.

Sing thou the lovers that, with garlands crowned,
Another's doors with amorous siege surround;
Sing of the torches glaring through the night,
And riot-ensigns of inebriate flight;
To him the secrets of thy lore impart,
Who aims to dupe a rigid keeper's art;
And teach him, by the magic of a lay,
Through bars and bolts to lure the nymph away."
She said: and on my brow the waters threw,
Drawn from the fountain, whence Philetas drew.

PRAISE OF A LIFE OF EASE

Love is the God of peace: we lovers know
But love's hard combats, and a mistress-foe:
Not gold's devouring want my soul has curst;
Not from a jewelled cup I slake my thirst;
I plough not wide Campania's mellowed soil,
Nor for thy brass in ships, oh Corinth! toil:
Ah! hapless clay that erst Prometheus pressed,
Moulding a rash and unforeseeing breast:
The skill, that knit the frame, o'erlooked the heart:
An upright reasoning soul escaped his art.
Now tost by winds we roam the troubled flood,
Link foe to foe, and restless pant for blood.
Fool! not on Acheron thy wealth shall float,
All naked drifting in the infernal boat.
The conqueror with the captive skims the tide,
And chained Jugurtha sits at Marius' side:
Robed Cræsus shares the tattered Irus' doom,
And owns that death the best, which soon shall come.
Me in youth's flower could Helicon entrance,
My hands with Muses linked in mazy dance:
Me has it charmed to bathe my soul in wine,
And vernal roses round my temples twine:
When irksome age hath stolen on loves delight,
And strewn my sable locks with sprinkled white:
Then may it please to search in Nature's ways,
And learn what God the world's vast fabric sways;

How dawns the rising east and fades again;
How the round moon repairs her crescent wane;
How winds the salt sea sweep, and the eastern blast
The billows warps, and clouds their ceaseless waters cast.
Whether a day shall come, when headlong hurled
Shall fall the tottering pillars of the world;
Why drinks the purpling bow the rainy cloud;
Why Pindus' summits reel in earthquake bowed;
Why shines the sun's wheeled orb with umbered light,
His golden coursers palled in morning night;
Why turns Boötes slow his starry wain,
Why sparkling throng the Pleiads' clustered train;
Why bounded roll the deepening ocean's tides;
Why the full year in parted seasons glides;
If under earth Gods judge, and giants rave;
Tisiphone's fierce ringlets snaky wave;
Furies Alcmæon scourge, and Phinaes hungering crave
Thirst burn in streams, wheels whirl, rocks backward leap,
Or hell's dark mouth three-headed Cerberus keep:
If Tityos' straitened limbs nine acres press;
Or fables mock man's credulous wretchedness
Through long tradition's age: nor terror's strife
Survive the pyre:—be such my close of life.
Go ye who list, the Parthian overcome,
Bring Crassus' wrested standards back to Rome.

THE BIRTH-DAY OF CYNTHIA

I MARVELLED what the smiling Muses led,
While blushed the rising sun, beside my bed.
My fair one's birth-day shone; and, standing round,
Thrice with clapped hands they gave the signal sound.
May this day cloudless pass, winds breathe no more;
And raging waves roll smoothly to the shore.
Let no sad looks on this blest day appear:
Ev'n Niobe suppress the marble tear:
The Halcyon's bills lay now their moans aside,
Nor on her son devoured let Progne chide.

And, dear-one! thou, in light-winged moments born,
Rise, pray the Heavens for blessings on thy morn.
Disperse the dews of sleep with waters fair,
With parting fingers sleek thy glossy hair;
The robe, that first allured Propertius' eyes,
Assume, nor for thy brow the flower despise.
Pray that those powerful beauties ne'er may fade,
And still my neck may bow, by Cynthia swayed.
When smoke of purifying incense streams
From the wreathed altar, and its broadening gleams
Fill all the gilt saloon with happy light,
Arrange the board; let goblets speed the night.
From box of yellow agate sweet dispense
The liquid nard moist breathing on the sense:
Let the sighed flute sob hoarse in midnight dance;
Thy wit in libertine gay sallies glance;
From jocund feast unwelcome sleep retreat,
And ringing echo din the neighbouring street.
Let the dice rattle and the throw denote
Whom that winged boy with heaviest pinions smote.
When many an hour has flowed in bumpers by,
Let Venus lend her nightly ministry:
Let us the yearly solemn love-rites pay,
And crown the pleasures of thy natal day.

THE METAMORPHOSES OF OVID

[BOOKS I TO IV INCLUSIVE]

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH PROSE BY

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION UPON

THE LIFE OF OVID

BY THE REV. ALFRED CHURCH, M.A.

INTRODUCTION

LIFE OF OVID

By the Rev. Alfred Church, M.A.

Early Life

Ovid, like Horace, is his own biographer. In some respects he is even more communicative than his fellow-poet. Horace, for instance, is reticent, as a rule, about his own compositions. The writer of the Odes might, for all we know, be a different man from the author of the Satires or the author of the Epistles. Ovid, on the contrary, takes good care that his readers should be well acquainted with the list of his works. And he also gives us the most copious and exact information about his birthplace, his family, his education, his marriage, his fortunes in general. Yet, for all this, the personality of the man himself seems to elude us. The real Ovid is almost as unknown to us as is the real Virgil.

Publius Ovidius Naso was born at Sulmo, a town in Peligni, a district of Northern Italy which took its name from one of the Samnite tribes. The poet speaks more than once of the fertility and healthfulness of his native district. These blessings it chiefly owed to its copious and unfailing streams. Its pastures never dried up, even under the scorching suns of an Italian summer. Its water-meadows are especially mentioned. It produced wheat in abundance; and its light fine soil was even better adapted for the vine and the olive.

The town of Sulmo boasted a high antiquity. It took the side of the vanquished party in the struggle between Marius and Sulla, and suffered cruelly in consequence. More fortunate in the next civil war, it opened its gates to Julius Cæsar. Ovid (he always called himself Naso) belonged to one of the oldest families in this town. It was of equestrian or knightly

rank, and had possessed this distinction for many generations. "In my family," he says, "you will find knights up through an endless line of ancestry;" and he looks down, just as among ourselves a baronet looks down on a knight, on men who had won that honour for themselves.

> I never climbed, not I, from step to step.

And he complains loudly to the faithless Corinna—

> Some knight, with wealth by wounds but newly earned,
> Full-fed on slaughter, is preferred to *me!*

The poet was born on March the 20th, 43 B.C. He marks the year by speaking of it as that

> In which both consuls met an equal fate.

These consuls were Hirtius and Pansa, both of whom perished at the siege of Mutina, fighting against Mark Antony. The Roman Republic virtually perished with them, though we may be sure that had they lived they could not have prolonged its existence.

Ovid had a brother who was his elder by exactly a year—

> A double birthday-offering kept the day.

The brothers were carefully educated, and were sent at an early age to the best teachers in Rome. Their father intended that both should follow the profession of an advocate. The intention suited the inclinations of the elder; the heart of the youngest was otherwise inclined. He wrote verses "by stealth." Ovid's father was contemptuous of the unprofitable pursuit, and, moved by the paternal admonitions—admonitions which indeed there were obvious ways of enforcing—the young poet applied himself seriously to the business of learning his profession.

The best known of those who have been mentioned as his teachers were Porcius Latro, by birth a Spaniard, who had migrated to Rome under the patronage of Augustus, and Arel-

lius Fuscus, a rival professor of the rhetorical art. It was Latro's practice to teach his pupils by declaiming before them; Fuscus, with what we may conjecture to have been a more effective method, made the youths themselves declaim. The Elder Seneca speaks of having heard Ovid perform such an exercise before Fuscus. "His speech," he says, "could not then be called anything else than poetry out of metre." But he adds that the poet had while a student a high reputation as a declaimer; and he speaks strongly in praise of the particular discourse which he had himself happened to hear, describing it as one of marked ability, though somewhat wanting in order. The poetical character of the young student's oratory—a character quite out of keeping, it should be remarked, with the genius of Latin eloquence—exactly suits what Ovid says of himself—

> Whate'er I sought to say was still in verse;

which may be paraphrased by Pope's famous line—

> I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.

Seneca further tells us that he had a special fondness for dealing with moral themes, and he gives some interesting instances of expressions in the poems which were borrowed from the declamations of his master, Latro.

The brothers assumed, in due time, the toga, or distinguishing dress of manhood. This robe, as sons of a knight of ancient family, and aspirants, it was presumed, to public life, they were permitted to wear with the broad edge of purple which distinguished the senator. The elder brother died immediately after completing his twentieth year, and this event removed the objection which the father had made to the indulgence of Ovid's poetical tastes. The family property, which was not of more than moderate extent, would not have to be divided, and there was no longer any necessity why the only son should follow a lucrative profession.

About this time we may place Ovid's visit to Athens. A single line contains all the mention that he makes of it, but

this informs us that he went there for purposes of study. Possibly his stay at Athens was followed or interrupted by a tour which he made in company with the poet Macer, the younger of that name, whose friendship he retained until the end of his life. This tour included the famous Greek cities of western Asia Minor. It was probably on this journey that Ovid visited the site of Troy. From Asia Minor they passed to Sicily, where they spent the greater part of a year;—a happy time, to which Ovid, addressing his old companions, in one of the letters of his exile, turns with pathetic regret.

Returning to the capital, he did not at once give up the prospect of a public career. On the contrary, he sought some of the minor offices in which the aspirant for promotion commonly began his course. We find him filling a post which seems singularly incongruous with his tastes and pursuits. He was made one of the *Triumviri Capitales,* officials who combined, to a certain degree, the duties of our police magistrates and under-sheriffs. They took the preliminary examination in cases of serious crimes, exercised a summary jurisdiction, both civil and criminal, in causes where slaves, or other persons not citizens, were concerned, inspected prisons, and superintended the execution of criminals. He also afterwards became a member of the "Court of the Hundred," which had an extensive and important jurisdiction in both civil and criminal matters. In this he was promoted to be one of the ten superintendents (*decemviri*) who formed the council of the presiding judge. He seems also to have occasionally acted as an arbitrator or referee. The profession of an advocate he never followed.

Ovid was now one of the "Twenty" who were regarded as candidates for the higher offices in the state, and for seats in the senate, and who enjoyed the distinction of sitting among senators in the orchestra seats of the circus and the amphitheatre. Members of the "Twenty," on attaining their twenty-fourth year, became eligible for the quætorship, an office connected with the revenue—the lowest in grade of the magistracies, properly so called, but giving a seat in the senate. Ovid declined to become a candidate for the office. He exchanged the broad purple stripe which he had worn as a

possible senator, for the narrower stripe which belonged to his hereditary rank as a knight. We must now regard him as a private gentleman of Rome, well-born, and of respectable but not ample means. His parents were still living, and he hints in one place that he had to content himself with a moderate allowance.

Very early in life, when, as he says himself, he was "almost a boy," Ovid was married to a wife probably chosen for him by his father. The match, he gives us to understand, brought him neither honour nor profit. Probably her conduct was not without reproach, and her fortune did not answer his expectations. She was speedily divorced. Another wife was soon found by him or for him. All that we know of her is, that she was a native of the Etrurian town of Falisci. He confesses that he had no fault to find with her; but the second marriage was, nevertheless, of as short duration as the first. It is easy to gather the cause from the poet's own confessions about himself.

The literary society of which the young poet now found himself a recognised member, was perhaps the most brilliant which has ever been collected in one place. The Athens of Pericles in one print surpassed it in the magnitude of individual genius. But in extent, variety of literary power, the Rome of Augustus stands pre-eminent in the history of letters. Virgil, Livy, Horace, Sallust, the greatest of the names which adorned the so-called "Augustan" age, had grown to manhood while the Republic still stood; Ovid, who may be said to close the period, was, as we have seen, born on the last day of Roman freedom. But, indeed, the best days of the Augustan age had almost passed when Ovid became a member of the literary society of the capital. Mæcenas, who made the imperial court the abode of letters, no longer shared, or indeed could have desired to share—so bitter was the wrong which he had suffered from his master—the emperor's friendship. Though still nominally a Councillor of State, he had actually retired into private life. Ovid never mentions his name. Nor was the young poet ever admitted to the intimacy of Augustus, whose court probably somewhat changed its tone after the retirement of the great literary minister.

For the older poets, whom he was privileged to see or know, Ovid describes himself as having felt an unbounded veneration:—

In every bard I saw a form divine.

"Virgil I did but see" (a phrase which has become almost proverbial[1]), he says, in his interesting account of his poetical acquaintance and friends. Virgil's habits—for he loved the country as truly as did Horace—and the feebleness of his health, seem to have made him a stranger at Rome during the latter years of his life.

Another great contemporary Ovid mentions in these words—

The tuneful Horace held our ears enchained.

"Tuneful," indeed, is a word which but feebly expresses the original epithet (*numerosus*). "That master of melody" is a more adequate rendering, and it is fit praise for one who had no predecessor or successor among his countrymen in his power of versification. There is nothing to indicate the existence of any friendship between the two poets. Horace was by more than twenty years the elder, and was beginning to weary of the life of pleasure upon which the younger man was just entering.

Not a single line has been preserved of three other of the poets whom Ovid regarded with such reverence. PONTICUS—

For epic song renowned—

wrote a poem in heroic—*i.e.*, hexameter—verse on the war of the "Seven against Thebes." Time has been peculiarly cruel to the world in not suffering it to survive, if we are to trust Propertius, who affirms, "as he hopes to be happy," that Ponticus was a match for Homer himself. Of BASSUS we absolutely know nothing but what Ovid tells us, that he was famous for his dramatic verse. ÆMILIUS MACER, of Verona, a fellow-countryman, and, as Ovid expressly mentions that he was much his own junior, probably a contemporary of Catul-

[1] "Virgilium tantum vidi."

lus, wrote poems, doubtless modelled after Greek originals, on birds, and noxious serpents, and the healing qualities of herbs. Another MACER, who has been mentioned already as Ovid's companion in travel, wrote about the Trojan war. Of DOMITIUS MARSUS, an elegiac poet, time has spared a beautiful epigram commemorating the death of Tibullus. It would be easy to prolong the list. In the last of his "Letters from the Pontus," Ovid names, each with a phrase descriptive of his genius or his work, the poets contemporary with himself. There are about thirty of them. Of some we do not know even the names, the poet having thought it sufficient to mention or allude to their principal works. Many of these who are named we do not find mentioned elsewhere, and Ovid's brief phrase is all that is left of them. The works of all have either perished altogether or survive in insignificant fragments.[1] Burmann, the most learned of Ovid's editors, says of MAXIMUS COTTA, the last on the list,—"Him and Capella and others oblivion has overwhelmed with inexorable night. Would that these poets, or, at least, the best part of them, had come down to us, and other foolish and useless books had remained sunk in eternal darkness!"

Happily for us, a kinder fate has spared the works of two out of the three poets whom Ovid has named as his predecessors and teachers in his own peculiar art of amatory verse. "He," says the poet, speaking of the untimely death of Tibullus, "was thy successor, Gallus; Propertius was his; I was myself the fourth in the order of time." The same collocation of names is repeated more than once, and never without expressions that indicate the pride which Ovid felt in being associated with men of such genius.

One reflection strikes us forcibly as we compare Ovid with his predecessors and contemporaries—a reflection which, whatever the qualities in which they may be allowed to have excelled him, explains and justifies the higher rank which he has received in the judgment of posterity. He was cast, so

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[1] The reader will be glad to see a noble utterance that has been preserved of one of their number: "All that I once have given still is mine" (*Hoc habeo quodcunque dedi*).

to speak, in a large mould, and made of stronger stuff. Nothing is more significant of this than the very superiority of his physical constitution. They almost without exception (we are not speaking now of Horace and Virgil) passed away in the very prime of their youth. The fiery passion which shines through their verse, and which often gives it a more genuine ring than we find in Ovid's smoother song, consumed them. Ovid was more master of himself. Nor was his intellectual life limited to the expression of passion. His mind was braced by the severe studies that produced the "Transmutations" and the "Roman Calendar." With this stronger, more practical, more varied intellect went along the more enduring physical frame. He had nearly reached his sixtieth year before he succumbed to the miseries and privations of a protracted exile. And sixty years of Roman life correspond, it must be remembered, to at least seventy among those who, like ourselves, date the beginning of manhood not from sixteen, but only nominally even from twenty-one. We may perhaps find a parallel, at least partially appropriate, in the contrast between Shakespeare and his more sturdy and healthful soul and frame, and his short-lived predecessors in the dramatic art, Marlowe and Greene, men of genius both, but consumed, as it were, by the fire with which he was inspired.

The Love-Poems

Under this title are included four productions which—to speak of those works alone which have come down to us—formed the literary occupation of Ovid from his twentieth to his forty-second year. These four are "The Epistles of the Heroines," "The Loves," "The Art of Love," and "Remedies for Love." It is in the second of these, doubtless, that we have the earliest of the poet's productions that survive. He tells us that he recited his juvenile poems to a public audience, for the first time, when his beard had been twice or thrice shaved. He also tells us that of these poems Corinna had been the inspiring subject.

"The Epistles of the Heroines" consists of twenty-one letters, supposed to have been written by women famous in

legend, to absent husbands or lovers. Penelope, the faithful wife, whom the twenty years' absence of her lord has not been able to estrange, writes to the wandering Ulysses; Phyllis, daughter of the Thracian king Sithon, complains of the long delay of her Athenian lover, Demophoon, in the land whither he had gone to prepare, as he said, for their marriage; the deserted Ariadne sends her reproaches after Theseus; Medea, with mingled threats and entreaties, seeks to turn Jason from the new marriage which he is contemplating; and Dido, a figure which Ovid has borrowed from the beautiful episode of the "Æneid," alternately appeals to the pity and denounces the perfidy of her Trojan lover.

There is a wearying monotony of subject-matter in the Epistles. The names are different, the circumstances are changed according as the several stories demand, but the theme is ever the same—love, now angry and full of reproaches, now tender and condescending to entreaty. But, on the other hand, though the theme is the same, the variety of expression is endless. The skill with which Ovid continues, again and again, to say the same thing without repeating himself, is astonishing. In this respect no poet has ever shown himself more thoroughly a master of his art. Feeling, too, real though not elevated, often makes itself felt in the midst of the artificial sentiment; if the style is disfigured with conceits, it is always exquisitely polished; the language is universally easy and transparent, and the verse an unbroken flow of exquisite melody.

The most celebrated of the Epistles is the letter of Sappho, the famous poetess of Lesbos, to Phaon, a beautiful youth who had betrayed her love. It has been admirably translated by Pope, whose polished antithetical style is as suitable, it should be said, to the artificial and rhetorical verse of Ovid, as it is incongruous with the simple grandeur of Homer. It is thus that he renders the passage in which Sappho announces her intention to try the famous remedy for hopeless love, the leap from the Leucadian rock:—

> A spring there is, where silver waters show,
> Clear as a glass, the shining sands below;

A flowery lotus spreads its arms above,
Shades all the banks, and seems itself a grove:
Eternal greens the mossy margin grace,
Watched by the sylvan genius of the place.
Here as I lay, and swelled with tears the flood,
Before my sight a watery virgin stood:
She stood and cried, "Oh, you that love in vain,
Fly hence, and seek the fair Leucadian main!
There stands a rock, from whose impending steep
Apollo's fane surveys the rolling deep;
There injured lovers, leaping from above,
Their flames extinguish and forget to love.
Deucalion once with hopeless fury burned,
In vain he loved, relentless Pyrrha scorned:
But when from hence he plunged into the main,
Deucalion scorned and Pyrrha loved in vain.
Hence, Sappho, haste! from high Leucadia throw
Thy wretched weight, nor dread the deeps below."
She spoke, and vanished with the voice—I rise,
And silent tears fall trickling from my eyes.
I go, ye nymphs, those rocks and seas to prove:
And much I fear; but ah! how much I love!
I go, ye nymphs, where furious love inspires;
Let female fears submit to female fires.
To rocks and seas I fly from Phaon's hate,
And hope from seas and rocks a milder fate.
Ye gentle gales, below my body blow,
And softly lay me on the waves below!
And then, kind Love, my sinking limbs sustain,
Spread thy soft wings, and waft me o'er the main,
Nor let a lover's death the guiltless flood profane!
On Phœbus' shrine my harp I'll then bestow,
And this inscription shall be placed below—
"Here she who sung to him that did inspire,
Sappho to Phœbus consecrates her lyre;
What suits with Sappho, Phœbus, suits with thee—
The gift, the giver, and the god agree!"[1]

We have "The Loves," in a second edition. "Five books," says the poet in his prefatory quatrain, "have been reduced

[1] This, and the following incidental translations, except where accredited to others writers, are by Henry King.

to three." "Though you find no pleasure in reading us," the volumes are made to say to the reader, "we shall at least, when thus diminished by two, vex you less."

A question immediately presents itself, Who was the Corinna whom Ovid celebrates in these poems? It has often been argued, and that by critics of no small authority, that she was no less famous a personage than Julia, daughter of the Emperor Augustus by his first wife Scribonia. Of Julia the briefest account will be the best. She was wife successively of Marcus Marcellus, nephew to Augustus; of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa; and of Tiberius, afterwards emperor. This last union was most unhappy. Tiberius had been compelled to divorce a wife whom he dearly loved, and he found himself bound to a woman whose profligacy was conspicuous even in a profligate age. After a short union he retired into a voluntary exile; and Augustus then became aware of what all Rome had long known, that his daughter was an abandoned woman. He banished her from Italy, and kept her in a rigorous imprisonment, which was never relaxed till her death. There is nothing, therefore, in the character of Julia that is inconsistent with her being the Corinna of Ovid's poems. References in them indicate that she was a lady of wealth and high social position. That she was married the poet expressly states. And a curious coincidence has been pointed out which, though it does not go very far, may be allowed to make for the identification with Julia. This princess had lost much of her hair through the unsparing use of dyes. And we find Ovid remonstrating with Corinna on her folly in producing in the same way the same disfigurement.

Of the subject-matter of "The Loves" there is little to be said. The passion which inspires the verse is coarser and more brutal than that of his rival poets, even when this shows itself in its worst phases. It has nothing of the fervour of Propertius, the tenderness of Tibullus. It does not spring from any depth of feeling. It is real, but its reality is of the basest, most literal sort. That he describes an actual amour is only too manifest, but that this was in any true sense of the words "an affair of the heart" may well be doubted. But then, again, he shows an incomparable skill in expres-

sion; he invests even the lowest things with a certain grace. His wit and fancy "sparkle on the stye." If he lets us get away for a moment from the mire—if, with the delicate fancy that never fails him, he tells us some legend that "boys and virgins" need not blush to read—he is charming. There never was a more subtle and ingenious master of language, and it is a grievous pity that he should so often have used it so ill. Our specimen of his "Loves" must be taken from the episodes rather than from the ordinary course of the poems. The following poem, however, will not offend.

It has been elegantly paraphrased and adapted to modern manners by Mr. A. A. Brodribb. It will remind the reader of a pretty passage in Mr. Tennyson's "Miller's Daughter:"—

THE RING

Sign of my too presumptuous flame,
To fairest Celia haste, nor linger,
And may she gladly breathe my name,
And gaily put thee on her finger!

Suit her as I myself, that she
May fondle thee with murmured blessing;
Caressed by Celia! Who could be
Unenvious of such sweet caressing?

Had I Nedea's magic art,
Or Proteus' power of transformation,
Then would I blithely play thy part,
The happiest trinket in creation!

Oh! on her bosom I would fall,
Her finger guiding all too lightly;
Or else be magically small,
Fearing to be discarded nightly.

And I her ruby lips would kiss
(What mortal's fortune could be better?)
As oft allowed to seal my bliss
As she desires to seal a letter.

Now go, these are delusions bright
Of idle Fancy's idlest scheming;
Tell her to read the token right—
Tell her how sweet is true love's dreaming.

The book also contains an elegy upon the death of Tibullus, which will be found in the introduction to that poet.

Of the "Art of Love" the less, perhaps, that is said the better. The poet himself warns respectable persons to have nothing to do with his pages, and the warning is amply justified by their contents. It has, however, some of the brilliant episodes which Ovid introduces with such effect. His own taste, and the taste, we may hope, of his readers, demanded that the base level of sensuality should sometimes be left for a higher flight of fancy. The description of Ariadne in Naxos is as brilliant as Titian's picture; equally vivid is the story of the flight of Dædalus and his son Icarus on the wings which the matchless craftsman had made, and of the fate which followed the over-daring flight of the youth through regions too near to the sun. Then, again, we find ever and anon pictures of Roman manners which may amuse without offence. Among such are Ovid's instructions to his fair readers how they may most becomingly take their part in the games of chance and skill which were popular in the polite circles of Rome. Ovid, after recommending his readers to practise a graceful playing at the games, wisely warns them that it is still more important that they should learn to keep their temper. The suitor he advises to allow his fair antagonist to win. Equally familiar will be the device of a present of fruit brought by a slave-boy in a rustic basket, which the lover will declare has been conveyed from a country garden, though he will probably have bought it in the neighbouring street. A certain sagacity must be allowed to the counsel that the lover, when his lady is sick, must not take upon himself the odious office of forbidding her a favourite dish; and will, if possible, hand over to a rival the office, equally odious, of administering a nauseous medicine. The recommendation not to be too particular in inquiring about age is equally sagacious. It is curious to observe that Lord Byron's expressed aversion to seeing women eat was not unknown to the Roman youth.

The "Remedies of Love" may be dismissed with a still briefer notice. Like the "Art of Love," it is relieved by some beautiful digressions. When it keeps close to its subject, it

is, to say the least, not edifying. The "Remedies," indeed, are for the most part as bad as the disease, though we must except that most respectable maxim that "idleness is the parent of love," with the poet's practical application of it. One specimen of these two books shall suffice. It is of the episodical kind,—a brilliant panegyric on the young Cæsar, Caius, son of Augustus's daughter Julia, who was then preparing to take the command of an expedition against the Parthians. Gross as is the flattery, it is perhaps less offensive than usual. The young Caius died before his abilities could be proved; but the precocious genius of the family was a fact. Caius was then of the very same age at which his grandfather had first commanded an army.

Once more our Prince prepares to make us glad,
And the remaining East to Rome will add.
Rejoice, ye Roman soldiers, in your urn;
Your ensigns from the Parthians shall return;
And the slain Crassi shall no longer mourn!
A youth is sent those trophies to demand,
And bears his father's thunder in his hand:
Doubt not th' imperial boy in wars unseen;
In childhood all of Cæsar's race are men.
Celestial seeds shoot out before their day,
Prevent their years, and brook no dull delay.
Thus infant Hercules the snakes did press,
And in his cradle did his sire confess.
Bacchus, a boy, yet like a hero fought,
And early spoils from conquered India brought.
Thus you your father's troops shall lead to fight,
And thus shall vanquish in your father's sight.
These rudiments you to your lineage owe;
Born to increase your titles as you grow.
Brethren you lead, avenge your brethren slain;
You have a father, and his right maintain.
Armed by your country's parent and your own,
Redeem your country and restore his throne.

—*Translated by* DRYDEN.

DOMESTIC LIFE

About Ovid's private life between his twentieth and fiftieth years there is little to be recorded. He married for

the third time. He had a daughter, probably by his second wife, although many commentators say it was by his third. This daughter had been twice married at the time of his banishment, when he was in his fifty-second year, and had borne a child to each husband. There is a letter addressed to one Perilla, written by Ovid in exile. Dr. Dyer, the learned author of the article "Ovidius" in the "Dictionary of Biography and Mythology," takes it for granted that this Perilla was Ovid's daughter, by his third wife, but the letter does not bear out the supposition, for, while the writer enlarges on the fact that he had instructed Perilla in the art of poetry, he does not say a word which indicates a closer relationship than that of master and pupil.

The poet's third wife was a lady of good position at Rome. In early years she had been what may be called a lady-in-waiting to the aunt of Augustus. The union lasted till his death, with much mutual affection. When it has been added that Ovid's town mansion was close to the Capitol, and that he had a suburban residence, where he amused himself with the pleasures of gardening, nothing remains to be told about this portion of his life.

Banishment

The cause of the banishment of Ovid, like the personality of the Man in the Iron Mask and the authorship of "Junius," is one of the unsolved problems of history. The facts absolutely known are very soon related. Ovid was in his fifty-second year. His fame as a poet was at its height. Any scandal that may have arisen from some of his publications had gradually passed away. Suddenly there fell on him "a bolt from the blue." A rescript in the emperor's hand was delivered to him, ordering him to leave Rome within a certain time, and to repair to Tomi, a desolate settlement on the western shore of the Black Sea, near the very outskirts of the empire. No decree of the senate had been passed to authorise the infliction of the banishment. It was simply an act of arbitrary power on the part of the emperor. The cause alleged was the publication of works corrupting to public morals, and the "Art of Love" was specified. The punish-

ment was not of the severest kind. The place of exile, hateful as it was to the banished man, was at least preferable to that which many offenders had to endure—some desolate rock in the Ægean, where the victim was kept from starvation only by the charity of his friends. Ovid was also permitted to retain and enjoy his property.

That the cause alleged was not the actual cause of the banishment may be considered certain. It is sufficient to say that the guilty work had been published at least ten years before. The offence was such as to afford a pretext of the barest kind to an absolute ruler who felt the force of public opinion just enough to make him shrink from a wholly arbitrary act, but was not careful to make any complete justification. But it did not, we may be sure, wholly sway his mind. We know, indeed, that there was another cause. To such a cause Ovid frequently alludes. And it is in this lies the mystery of the event.

Augustus had felt the unutterable shame of discovering that his own daughter Julia was the most profligate woman in Rome. This unhappy woman had inherited the vicious propensities of her mother Scribonia. One of many lovers was Decius Julius Silanus, member of a family which had been distinguished in Rome since the second Punic war. The intrigue was too notorious to escape observation, and Livia had the opportunity which she desired. Julia was banished; her paramour went into voluntary exile.

So far we are on firm historical ground. It may be added also, that the same year which saw the disgrace of Julia, witnessed also the banishment of Ovid. Were the two events in any way connected?

Let us see what Ovid says on the subject:—

"Two faults overthrew me—my verses and my wrongdoing; but about the guilt of one of them I must keep silence."

"Because my eyes unknowingly beheld a crime, I am punished. To have had the power of sight—this is my sin."

"I am not worth so much as to renew thy wound, O Cæsar; it is far too much that you should once have felt the pang."

"You [Augustus] avenged on me, as is right, a quarrel of your own."

That he became acquainted with some crime which touched nearly the honour of Augustus; that he concealed it; that in some sense he made himself an accomplice in it; that this crime was not an isolated act, but a line of conduct pursued for some time; that Ovid was afraid or thought it better not to reveal his knowledge of it,—are, it seems, inferences that may fairly be drawn from the language which he uses. They harmonise with the supposition that Ovid became involuntarily acquainted with the intrigue of the younger Julia with Silanus,—that he helped to conceal it, possibly assisted in its being carried on. The emperor, for a second time, is struck to the heart by the discovery of the darkest profligacy in one very near to himself. In his capacity as ruler he is terrified by the corruption which his laws are powerless to stay. The poems which the severer moralists of his court had possibly criticised, come to his recollection, and he finds that the author has actually abetted the guilty intrigues of his granddaughter. Accordingly he banished Ovid.

Ovid's account of his leaving Rome is eminently graphic and not a little pathetic:

When there starts up before me the sad, sad picture of that night which was the last of my life in Rome, when I remember the night on which I left so many of my treasures, even now the tear falls from my eyes. The day had almost come on which Cæsar had bid me pass beyond the farthest limits of Italy. But I had not had the thought of preparation. Nay, the very time had been against me: so long the delay, that my heart had grown slothful at the thought of it. I had taken no pains to select my slaves, or to choose a companion, or to procure the clothing or the money that a banished man required. I was as dazed as one who, struck by the bolts of Jupiter, lives, but is all unconscious of his life. But when my very grief had cleared away the mist from my soul, and I was at last myself again, I addressed for the last time ere my departure my sorrowing friends,—there were but one or two out of all the crowd. My loving wife clasped me close; bitter my tears, still bitterer hers, as they ever poured down her innocent cheeks. My daughter was far away on African shores, and could not have heard of her father's fate. Look where you would, there was wailing and groaning, and all the semblance of a funeral, clamorous in its grief. My funeral it was; husband and wife and the very slaves

were mourners; every corner of my house was full of tears. Such —if one may use a great example for a little matter—such was the aspect of Troy in its hour of capture.

And now the voices of men and dogs were growing still, and the moon was guiding high in heaven the steeds of night. As I regarded it, and saw in its light the two summits of the Capitol,—the Capitol that adjoined but did not protect my home,—"Powers," I cried, "who dwell in these neighbouring shrines, and temples that my eyes may never look upon again, and ye gods, dwelling in the lofty city of Romulus, gods whom now I must leave, take my farewell for ever! Too late, indeed, and already wounded, I snatch up the shield; yet acquit, I pray, my banishment of an odious crime; and tell the human denizen of heaven [Augustus] what was the error that deceived me, lest he think it a crime rather than a mistake; tell it that the author of my punishment may see the truth which you know. My god once propitiated, I shall be wretched no longer."

These were the prayers that I addressed to heaven; my wife, with sobs that stopped her words half-way, spoke many more. She, too, before our home-gods threw herself with dishevelled hair, and touched with trembling lips our extinguished hearth. Many a prayer she poured out in vain to their hostile deity, words that might avail naught for the husband whom she mourned.

And now night, hurrying down the steep, forbade further delay, and the Bear of Arcady had traversed half the sky. What could I do? Tender love for my country held me fast; but that night was the last before my doom of banishment. Ah! how often would I say, when some one would bid me haste, "Why hurry me? think whither you would hasten my steps, and whither I must go!" Ah! how often did I pretend to have settled on some certain hour which would suit my purposed voyage! Thrice I touched the threshold,[1] thrice I was called back; my very feet, as if to indulge my heart, lingered on their way. Often, farewell once spoken, I said many a word; often, as if I was really departing, I bestowed my last kisses. Often I gave the same commands; I cheated my own self, as I looked on the pledges so dear to my eyes. And then, "Why do I hasten? It is Scythia to which I am being sent; it is Rome which I have to leave; both justify delay. My wife is refused to me for ever, and yet we both live; my family and the dear

[1] To touch the threshold with the foot in crossing it was considered unlucky.

member of that faithful family; yes, and you, my companions, whom I loved with a brother's love, hearts joined to mine with the loyalty of a Theseus! while I may, I embrace you; perchance I may never do so again; the hour that is allowed me is so much gain."

It is the end: I leave my words unfinished, while I embrace in heart all that is dearest to me. While I speak, and we all weep, bright shining in the height of heaven, Lucifer, fatal star to us, had risen; I am rent in twain, as much as if I were leaving my limbs behind; one part of my very frame seemed to be torn from the other. Such was the agony of Mettus when he found the avengers of his treachery in the steeds driven opposite ways. Then rose on high the cries and the groanings of my household, then the hands of mourners beat uncovered breasts, and then my wife, clinging to my shoulder as I turned away, mingled with her tears these mournful words: "You cannot be torn from me; together, ah! together will we go. I will follow you; an exile myself, I will be an exile's wife. For me too is the journey settled; me too that distant land shall receive; 'tis but a small burden that will be added to the exile's bark. 'Tis the wrath of Cæsar that bids thee leave thy country—'tis love that bids me; love shall be in Cæsar's place." Such was her endeavour,—such had been her endeavour before; scarcely would she surrender, overpowered by expediency.

I go forth; it was rather being carried forth without the funeral pomp; I go all haggard, with hair drooping over unshaven face; and she, they tell me, as in her grief for me the mist rose all before her, fell fainting in the midst of the dwelling; and when, her hair all smirched with the unseemly dust, she rose again, lifting her limbs from the cold ground, she bewailed now herself, now her deserted hearth, and called again and again the name of her lost husband, and groaned, not less than had she seen the high-built funeral pile claim her daughter's body or mine. Gladly would she have died, and lost all feeling in death; and yet she lost it not, out of thought for me. Long may she live; live, and ever help with her aid her absent—so the Fates will have it—her absent husband. —The "Sorrows," I. 3.

It was in the month of December that the poet left Rome. One faithful friend, Fabius Maximus by name, accompanied him. Following the Appian road to Brundusium, then, as after many centuries it has become again, the usual route of western travellers bound eastward, he crossed the Adriatic. A fearful storm, not unusual at this season, en-

countered him on his way; and the indefatigable poet describes it in his most elegant verse—too elegant, indeed, to allow us to suppose that it was written, as it claims to be, in the very midst of the peril.

The tempest abated, and the poet reached his destination, Lechæum, the eastern harbour of "Corinth on the two seas." Traversing the isthmus to the western port, Cenchrea, he embarked again in a vessel which, he tells us, was called The Helmet, and bore on its deck an image of "Minerva of the Yellow Locks." It took him to Samothrace, whence Ovid took passage in a coasting vessel to the neighbouring shore of Thrace, and made the rest of his journey overland.

Tomi, or, as Ovid himself calls it, Tomis, was a city of Greek origin (it was a colony of Miletus), situated on the western coast of the Black Sea, about two hundred miles to the north of Byzantium. The name may be rendered in English by The Cuts. Possibly it was derived from a canal or fosse cut to the nearest point of the Danube, which here approaches, just before making its last bend to the north, within the distance of fifty miles. The lively fancy of the poet found in the legend of Medea a more romantic origin. The wicked princess, who embodied the poet's conception of the wild unscrupulous passion of the oriental character, had resorted, when closely pursued in her flight, to a terrible expedient. She slew her young brother Absyrtus, the darling of the angry father who was following her. His head she fixed on a prominent rock where it could not escape the notice of the pursuers. His limbs she scattered about the fields. She hoped, and not in vain, that the parent's head would bid him delay his voyage till he had collected the human remains. It was said that Tomi was the place where the deed was done, and that its name preserved the tradition of its horrible details.

The town is now called Kostendje, a corruption of Constantina, a name which it received for the same reason which changed Byzantium into Constantinople. It was situated in the province of Lower Mœsia. Though not exactly on the frontier, which was here, nominally at least, the Danube, it was practically an outpost of the empire. The

plain between it and that river was open to the incursions of the unsubdued tribes from the further side of the Danube, who, when they had contrived to effect the passage of the river, found nothing to hinder them till they came to the walls of Tomi.

Ovid describes the place of his exile in the gloomiest language. Such language, indeed, was natural in the mouth of a Roman. To him no charm of climate, no beauty of scenery, no interest of historical association, could make a place endurable, while Rome, the one place in the world which was worth dwelling in, was forbidden to him. But Tomi, if its unfortunate inhabitant is to be believed, combined in itself every horror. It was in the near neighbourhood of savage and barbarous tribes. The climate was terrible; the snow lay often unmelted for two years together. The north wind blew with such fury that it levelled buildings with the ground, or carried away their roofs. The natives went about clad in garments of skin, with their faces only exposed to the air. Their hair, their beards, were covered with icicles. The very wine froze: break the jar and it stood a solid lump; men took not draughts but bites of it. The rivers were covered with ice; the Danube itself, though it was as broad as the Nile, was frozen from shore to shore, and became a highway for horses and men. The sea itself, incredible as it may seem, is frozen. "I," says the poet, "have myself walked on it.

> "Had such, Leander, been the sea
> That flowed betwixt thy love and thee,
> Never on Helles' narrow strait
> Had come the scandal of thy fate.

"The dolphins cannot leap after their wont: let the north wind rage as it will, it raises no waves. The ships stand firmly fixed as in stone, and the oar cannot cleave the waters. You may see the very fish bound fast in the ice, imprisoned but still alive. But the worst of all the horrors of winter is the easy access which it gives to the barbarian foe. Their vast troops of cavalry, armed with the far-reaching bow, scour the whole country. The rustics fly for their lives, and

leave their scanty provisions to be plundered. Some, more unlucky, are carried off into captivity; some perish by the arrows which this cruel enemy dips in poison. And all that the enemy cannot carry or drive off, he burns."

It is difficult to suppose that some of these statements are not exaggerated. The climate of Bulgaria (the name which Lower Mœsia has had since its invasion by the Bulgarians in the seventh century) bears little resemblance to that which Ovid describes. It has a temperature not unlike that of northern Spain, and its soil is described as fertile, the vine being one of its chief products. It is quite possible that the climate may have materially changed since Ovid's time. On more than one occasion the classical poets speak of severities of cold such as are not now experienced in Italy and Greece. If we allow something for such change, and something also for the exaggeration which not only expressed a genuine feeling of disgust, but might possibly have the effect of moving compassion, we shall probably be right.

Ovid's life in exile lasted about eight years. He left Rome in the month of December following his fifty-first birthday; he died some time before the beginning of the September after his fifty-ninth.

The Metamorphoses, or Transformations

Ovid tells us that before he was banished he had written, but not corrected, the fifteen books of the "Metamorphoses," and had also composed twelve books (only six have been preserved) of the "Fasti" or Roman Calendar. The former he revised, the latter he greatly amplified in his exile.

In the "Metamorphoses" we have the largest and most important of Ovid's works; and, if we view it as a whole, the greatest monument of his poetical genius. The plan of the book is to collect together, out of the vast mass of Greek mythology and legend, the various stories which turn on the change of men and women from the human form into animals, plants, or inanimate objects. Nor are the tales merely collected. Such a collection would have been inevitably monotonous and tiresome. With consummate skill the poet

arranges and connects them together. The thread of connection is often indeed slight; sometimes it is broken altogether. But it is sufficiently continuous to keep alive the reader's interest; which is, indeed, often excited by the remarkable ingenuity of the transition from one tale to another. But it did not escape the author's perception, that to repeat over and over again the story of a marvel which must have been as incredible to his own contemporaries as it is to us, would have been to insure failure. Hence the metamorphoses themselves occupy but a small part of the book, which finds its real charm and beauty in the brilliant episodes, for the introduction of which they supply the occasion.

[Four books of the Metamorphoses are given in the translation following this introduction. Books five to eleven inclusive treat largely of the adventures of heroes and demigods, such as Perseus, Jason, Hercules, Minos, and Theseus, and of episodes, such as the Brand of Meleager, Philemon and Baucis, Orpheus and Eurydice, Pygmalion and Galatea, Venus and Adonis, and Ceÿx and Halcyone, as well as various transmutations. Ceÿx and Halcyone is one of the most representative tales of Ovid, because of his transfusion of so much of Roman spirit and feeling into the Greek original. The essential portion of the story is here presented in the translation of the editor of the present work.]

THE HALCYON BIRDS

[OVID, METAMM. XI., 650-748]

Ceÿx, the King of Trachyn, has been drowned at sea. Morpheus, the God of Dreams, assumes his form, and sets out to apprise his wife Halcyonë, in a vision, of her husband's death.

So Morpheus, spreading his silent wings,
Forthwith into the gulf of æther flings,
And, through the midnight softly gliding down,
Comes very shortly to far Trachyn town
Within the land Hæmonian.[1] Laying by
Its mighty wings, his body wondrously

[1]Hæmonia was an ancient name for Thessaly.

Takes on the shape of Ceÿx. Vestureless
And wan and bloodless in his nakedness,
He stands beside her couch, unhappy one,
Who was the wife of Ceÿx. Thickly run
The oozy drops down matted beard and hair,
Soon whelmed with sudden tears, as leaning there
Above her couch, "O poor, poor wife," he cries;
"Dost thou not know thy lord? Dear, startled eyes,
Hath death so changed me? Look, be not afraid,
And for thy husband, see thy husband's shade!"
Naught have availed thy prayers, Halcyonë,
Hope not that I shall e'er return to thee.
I perished in the mid Ægean; fast
Driving his rack of storm-clouds, Auster's blast
Dashed all in pieces our devoted boat;
Thy name I strove to call, but in my throat
Wave-choked, the utterance died. Believe me, dear,
This is no empty rumor thou dost hear,
Nor doth a lying courier tell it thee,
But thine own Ceyx, shipwreck of the sea.
Arise to tears and weeds of them that mourn
And save my ghost from Tartarus' dim bourn."

Spake thus in Ceÿx' voice the God of Dreams;
Shedding true tears, her husband's self he seems
In every well-known gesture. Bound in sleep,
Halcyonë can only moan, and weep,
And grasp with slumber-heavy arms to stay
The airy vision. "Husband, where away?
We twain will go together." In affright,
By her own voice awakened, and the sight
Of her dead lord, from sleep she struggles free
And gazes round the woful Shape to see
(For the roused slaves had hurried in with lights);
And when she finds him not, her face she smites
And strips the garments from her bosom bare,
And beats her breast, nor stops to loose her hair,
But madly tears it in her anguish wild.
Spake then her nurse: "Halcyonë, my child——"
"Halcyonë? She lives no more, she died
When died her Ceÿx; comfort me not," she cried;

"No more, no more is there Halcyonë;
I saw his body, battered by the sea,
I saw, and knew, and wide my arms I spread,—
The presence shunned them, and I kenned him dead;
Not with his cheerful face and wonted air,
But wan, and naked, and with dripping hair.
Ah, woful me! upon this very place
His poor ghost stood." And then she stoops to trace
Prints of his feet, if any such remain.
"This was the fate that my bewildered brain
Divined so darkly, when upon the wind
Thy thoughts were flown, and I was left behind.
Sweet had it been to go with thee, and good
To know in life or death no widowhood.
Apart we toss upon the selfsame wave
That grants me death, but not to share thy grave.
More cruel than the deep would be my heart,
If I should longer strive to live apart,
Or seek, through dragging years, a vain relief
In contest with unconquerable grief.
I will not strive, nor thus abandon thee,
Poor mateless body, tossing on the sea;
If in the tomb bone may not rest with bone,
We yet shall be united on the stone;
If on the pyre, flame mingles not with flame,
Still in the legend name shall touch with name"—
Here utterance died in mingled word and moan,
And grief found vent in racking sobs alone.

Day dawns. Her sad form moves along the strand
Seeking the place where last he touched the land.
"Here, while he lingered, loosing slow the ship,
Here, where upon the shore the wavelets lip,
He gave me kisses." While in memory
She views the scene, gazing upon the sea,
She spies, far out upon the ocean's rim,
An object, shapeless in the distance dim,
Which, as the billow brings it nearer land
Shows somewhat like a corpse, till, close at hand,
A shipwrecked mariner it plain appears.
She, witless who it is, bursts into tears,

Moved by the omen of her own great woe.
"Oh wretched one, whoe'er thou art, and oh,
Thy wife, if such there be, more wretched still!"
Nearer it drifts, clearer she sees, until
Her senses reel. "Ceÿx!" she cries, "'tis thou!"
And tears her hair and garments, beats her brow
And lifts her trembling hands: "O husband dear,
And is it thus thou comest home?"

A pier
There is, built out into the sea, which takes
The first shock of the ocean surge, and breaks
The fury of its onset. Hither springs
Halcyonë, and wondrous new-formed wings
Beat the light air, and bear her o'er the wave
A wretched bird. And as she flew, she gave
Forth from her slender bill a wailing cry,
Like to a prisoned soul in agony.
Reaching the mute, pale body of her love,
In vain with pinions strange the poor bird strove
Unto her breast his dear, dead limbs to fold,
The while her hardened bill rained kisses cold.
Now be it by these kisses which she gave,
Or be it by the motion of the wave,
Certes it is, as those who saw it said,
The dead man seemed to know, and raised his head.
And I believe he knew,—so strong is Love.
And so, through pity of the gods above
To birds they both were changed, and so abide.
At one in death, e'en Death could not divide
Their married love, and so the tie remains.
Still do they mate, and, mid the winter rains,
Through seven summer days Halcyonë
Broods on her nest, hanging above the sea.
For winds and waves the Storm God doth subdue
For his dear children and their love so true.

The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth books are concerned largely with the events of the Trojan War, and with the adventures of Æneas.

The fifteenth or last book of the "Metamorphoses" contains an eloquent exposition of the Pythagorean philosophy.

Pythagoras, a Greek by birth, had made Italy, the southern coasts of which were indeed thickly studded with the colonies of his nation, the land of his adoption, and the traditions of his teaching and of his life had a special interest for the people to which had descended the greatness of all the races—Oscan, Etruscan, Greek—which had inhabited the beautiful peninsula.

The doctrine most commonly connected with Pythagoras's name was that of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls from one body to another, whether of man or of the lower animals. It was an old belief of the Aryan race, and it had a practical aspect which commended it to the Roman mind, always more inclined to ethical than to metaphysical speculations. Ovid saw in it the philosophical explanation of the marvels which he has been relating, and, as it were, their vindication from the possible charge of being childish fables, vacant of any real meaning, and unworthy of a serious pen. The passage which follows refers to a practical rule in which we may see a natural inference from the philosophical dogma. If a man is so closely allied to the lower animals—if their forms are made, equally with his, the receptacles of the one divine animating spirit—then there is a certain impiety in his slaughtering them to satisfy his wants. Strangely enough, the progress or revolution of human thought has brought science again to the doctrine of man's kindred with the animals, though it seems altogether averse to the merciful conclusion which Pythagoras drew from it.

> What had ye done, ye flocks, ye peaceful race
> Created for Man's blessing, that provide
> To slake his thirst your udder's nectarous draught,
> That with your fleece wrap warm his shivering limbs,
> And serve him better with your life than death?—
> What fault was in the Ox, a creature mild
> And harmless, docile, born with patient toil
> To lighten half the labour of the fields?—
> Ungrateful he, and little worth to reap
> The crop he sowed, that, from the crooked share
> Untraced, his ploughman slew, and to the axe
> Condemned the neck that, worn beneath his yoke,

For many a spring his furrows traced, and home
With many a harvest dragged his Autumn-wain!
Nor this is all:—but Man must of his guilt
Make Heaven itself accomplice, and believe
The Gods with slaughter of their creatures pleased!
Lo! at the altar, fairest of his kind,—
And by that very fairness marked for doom,—
The guiltless victim stands,—bedecked for death
With wreath and garland!—Ignorant he hears
The muttering Priest,—feels ignorant his brows
White with the sprinkling of salted meal
To his own labour owed,—and ignorant
Wonders, perchance, to see the lustral urn
Flash back the glimmer of the lifted knife
Too soon to dim its brightness with his blood!
And Priests are found to teach, and men to deem
That in the entrails, from the tortured frame
Yet reeking torn, they read the hest of Heaven!—
O race of mortal men! what lust, what vice
Of appetite unhallowed, makes ye bold
To gorge your greed on Being like your own?
Be wiselier warned:—forbear the barbarous feast,
Nor in each bloody morsel that ye chew
The willing labourer of your fields devour!

. . . . .

All changes:—nothing perishes!—Now here,
Now there, the vagrant spirit roves at will,
The shifting tenant of a thousand homes:—
Now, elevate, ascends from beast to man,—
Now, retrograde, descends from man to beast;—
But *never dies!*—Upon the tablet's page
Erased, and written fresh, the characters
Take various shape,—the wax remains the same:—
So is it with the Soul that, migrating
Through all the forms of breathing life, retains
Unchanged its essence. Oh, be wise, and hear
Heaven's warning from my prophet-lips, nor dare
With impious slaughter, for your glutton-greed,
The kindly bond of Nature violate,
Nor from its home expel the Soul, perchance
Akin to yours, to nourish blood with blood!

It has been handed down to us on good authority that Virgil, in his last illness, desired his friend to commit his "Æneid" to the flames. It had not received his final corrections, and he was unwilling that it should go down to posterity less perfect than he could have made it. The desire, though it doubtless came from a mind enfeebled by morbid conditions of the body, was probably sincere. We can hardly believe as much of what Ovid tells us of his own intentions about the "Metamorphoses:" "As for the verses which told of the changed forms—an unlucky work, which its author's banishment interrupted—these in the hour of my departure I put, sorrowing, as I put many other of my good things, into the flames with my own hands." Doubtless he did so; nothing could have more naturally displayed his vexation. But he could hardly have been ignorant that in destroying his manuscript he was not destroying his work. "As they did not perish altogether," he adds, "but still exist, I suppose that there were several copies of them." But it is scarcely conceivable that a poem containing as nearly as possible twelve thousand lines should have existed in several copies by chance, or without the knowledge of the author.

Ovid's masterpiece has been accepted by posterity as second in rank—second only to Virgil's epic—among the great monuments of Roman genius. It has been translated into every language of modern Europe that possesses a literature. Its astonishing ingenuity, the unfailing variety of its colours, the flexibility with which its style deals alike with the sublime and the familiar, and with equal facility is gay and pathetic, tender and terrible, have well entitled it to the honour, and justify the boast with which the poet concludes:—

> So crown I here a work that dares defy
> The wrath of Jove, the fire, the sword, the tooth
> Of all-devouring Time!—Come when it will
> The day that ends my life's uncertain term,—
> That on this corporal frame alone hath power
> To work extinction,—high above the Stars
> My nobler part shall soar,—my Name remain
> Immortal,—wheresoe'er the might of Rome

O'erawes the subject Earth my Verse survive
Familiar in the mouths of men!—and, if
A Bard may prophesy, while Time shall last
Endure, and die but with the dying World!

The Fasti, or Roman Calendar

Augustus not only swayed the armies of Rome—he was also supreme pontiff. It was the dream of his life to reawaken the old Roman patriotism, and to kindle in the men of his own day something like the sentiments of the past. The age might be frivolous and luxurious; but he knew well that the Roman mind was profoundly religious. The gods had been neglected, and their temples had fallen into decay during the civil wars; and we may well believe that Horace expressed what was in the minds of many when he prophesied dire judgments on the State unless the sacred buildings were restored.[1] To this work the emperor assiduously applied himself. He built temple after temple, established priesthoods, and revived old religious ceremonials. Everywhere in the capital were now to be seen the outward signs of piety and devotion. Religion, in fact—its history, its ritual, all its ancient associations—became subjects of popular interest; and, as might be expected, a fashionable poet could not do otherwise than recognise in his verses the growth of this new taste among his countrymen. Nor would he find any difficulty in doing so. A Roman could seldom be original, but, on the other hand, there was scarcely anything for which a model could not be found in Greek literature. Alexandria had long been a famous literary centre, and its scholars and authors had handled every conceivable subject, human and divine. There, in the third century B.C., in the reigns of Ptolemy Philadelphus and Ptolemy Euergetes, had flourished Callimachus, specially distinguished by his attainments as a grammarian and critic. He was at the head, as he no doubt well deserved to be, of the great library of Alexandria. Unfortunately, of his more learned works, which were on a

[1] Odes, III. 6

vast scale, nothing but the titles and a few meagre fragments have come down to us. He was, however, a poet as well as a scholar, and some of his poems, hymns, and epigrams have survived. It appears that they were singularly popular, though, it must be admitted, they remind us of the familiar proverb, "A poet is born, not made." However, it is certain that the Roman poets of the Augustan age liked them, and thought it worth their while to imitate them. Catullus has done this in his famous poem on the "Hair of Berenice." Propertius even made it his aim to be a Roman Callimachus, and sometimes became intolerably obscure and affected in the attempt.

It need not surprise us that Ovid followed in the wake of two such eminent men. He knew the public for whom he was writing; he knew, too, what sort of poems would be approved by the emperor and the court. A learned poem, dwelling on the old worship of his country, and commemorating the glories of its great families, would appeal successfully to a wide circle of readers. For such a work he had a model ready to his hand in an epic of Callimachus, which appears to have given in detail a multitude of myths and legends, with some account of old customs and religious rites. This poem, which has not come down to us, was entitled "Causes," and was, it may be supposed, a learned poetical dissertation on the cause or origin of the various beliefs current among mankind, and of the outward forms in which they had embodied themselves. It was this elaborate work which Ovid undertook to imitate, and perhaps to popularise. The result is the poem commonly known as the "Fasti."

We may describe this work as a sort of handbook of the Roman Calendar, or as a poetical almanac, or as a ritual in verse. It gives, as Dean Merivale says, "the seasons and reasons" of every special religious worship and ceremonial. The mythology of old Rome and the legends of her heroes are worked, and worked with wonderful success, into the texture of the poem. What in the hands of a mere Dryasdust would have been intolerably wearisome and dull, becomes under Ovid's treatment the lightest and pleasantest of reading. The marvellous ease and dexterity with which he turns

his not always very plastic materials into the smoothest and most graceful verse, perpetually strikes a scholar with amazement. He takes a story or a legend from some old annalist, and tells it with a neatness and a finish which, in its own way, has never been rivalled. This was a charm which a Roman must have appreciated better than we can, but there were many other things which tended to make the "Fasti" a thoroughly popular poem. It must have been pleasant to an ordinary reader to have picked up a good deal of antiquarian lore in a few hours of easy and delightful reading. The book would continually have been in the hands of the fashionable lady, who would think that it became her position to know something about the meaning and *rationale* of her religious observances. And we may take for granted it would please Augustus. Anything which familiarised the people with old beliefs and traditions would be certain to have his hearty sympathies. The poet too, of course, took care to extol and magnify the great family of the Julii, and to hint every now and then that Roman grandeur was providentially connected with their supremacy.

Such is the general idea and purpose. The poem, as we have it, is in six books; originally (of this there can hardly be a doubt) it consisted of twelve, each month of the Roman calendar having a book devoted to it. The calendar, like our own week, had a religious basis. Some of the months took their names from Roman divinities. March had been the first month in the old calendar, according to which the year was divided into ten months. The first Cæsar, who laid his reforming hand on everything, brought his universal knowledge to bear on this intricate subject, and introduced a new arrangement by which the year was henceforth to be made up of twelve months, January being the first. Ovid represents the god Janus as visibly appearing to him, and explaining his origin and attributes. A key is in his left hand, as a symbol of his august office as the Beginner and Opener of all things. He addresses Ovid as the "laborious poet of the Days," and then unfolds his various mysterious functions, and the meaning of the two faces which were regarded as his appropriate representation.

The poet describes himself as encouraged to continue the dialogue. He wants to know why the year should begin with cold, rather than what might seem a more appropriate commencement, the warmth of spring. He is told that it follows the sun, which now, gathering strength and lengthening its course, begins a new existence. "Why should not New-year's day be a holiday?" "We must not begin by setting an example of idleness." Then, after other questions, "What is the meaning of the customary gift of palm, and dried figs, and honey in the white comb?" "It is well that the year, if it is to be sweet, should begin with sweets." "But why presents of money?" Janus then explains the significance of the emblems on the coins that were given on his festival. The double head on one side was his own likeness; the ship on the reverse was the memorial of that which in old time had borne Saturn, expelled from the throne of heaven, to his kingdom in Italy. A description of his happy reign, "The Golden Age," as the ancients fondly called it, follows.

Five other days of the month are similarly distinguished. On the eleventh of January occurs the festival of the Agonalia, and Ovid takes the opportunity to display his etymological learning in accounting for the name. Was it not the word *Agnalia,* "the sacrifice of lambs," with the "*o*" inserted?

With characteristic ingenuity he then digresses into an elegant history of the growth of sacrifice. Meal and salt sufficed for the simple offerings of early days. No spices then had come from across the sea. Savin and the crackling bay-leaf gave perfume enough; and it was only the wealthy who could add violets to the garlands of wild flowers. The earliest victim was the pig, which was sacrificed to Ceres, in punishment for the injury that he did to the crops under her protection. Warned by his fate, the goat should have spared the vine-shoots; but he offended, and fell a victim to the wrath of Bacchus. The pig and the goat were guilty. But how had the ox and the sheep offended? The ox first suffered at the bidding of Proteus, from whom the shepherd Aristæus, disconsolate at the loss of his bees, learnt that a carcass buried in the ground would furnish him with a new supply. The

sheep was guilty, it would seem, of eating the sacred herb vervain. What animal could hope to escape, when the ox and the sheep perished? The Sun-god demanded the horse, swiftest of animals; Diana, the hind, which once had been made the substitute for the maiden Iphigenia. "I myself," says Ovid, "have seen the wild tribes who dwell near the snow of Hæmus sacrifice the dog to Hecate." Even the ass falls a victim to Silenus, who could never forgive him for an untimely bray. Birds suffer because they reveal the counsels of gods by the indications of the future which soothsayers detect in their movements and their cries. The goose is not protected by the service which he did to Rome in wakening the defenders of the Capitol. And the cock, who summons the day, is made an offering to the Goddess of Night.

The thirteenth of the month introduces the story of Evander, one of the graceful narrations with which Ovid relieves the antiquarian details of the "Fasti." Evander is indeed a conspicuous personage in Italian legend. An Arcadian prince, banished in early youth from his native land, but not for any fault of his own, he had settled in Italy many years before the Trojan war. He was in extreme old age when Æneas, carrying with him the fortunes of the future Rome, landed on the Latian shore; and he gave to the struggle the support of his first alliance. Virgil in his great epic has made a copious use of the story. The voyage of the Trojan chief up the unknown stream of Tiber to the homely court of the Arcadian king, his hospitable reception, the valour and untimely death of the young Pallas, who leads his father's troops to fight by the side of the destined heirs of Italy, furnish some of the most striking scenes in the "Æneid." Ovid, in describing Evander's arrival in Italy, puts into his mouth a prophecy of the future greatness of Rome, which with characteristic dexterity he turns into elaborate flattery of Tiberius and Livia, the emperor's mother. This passage, which, it is evident, was written after the death of Augustus, is one of the many proofs that the Fasti were kept under revision until close upon the end of the poet's life. To the legend of Evander is attached the story of Hercules and Cacus. Roman writers were anxious to make their own country the

scene of some of the wondrous exploits of the great "knight-errant" of antiquity. The tale ran as follows:—

Somewhere near the strait which joins the Atlantic to the Inner Sea dwelt Geryones, a hideous monster with triple body, master of a herd of oxen of fabulous beauty. Him the wandering Hercules slew, and driving the cattle homewards to Argos, found himself—having, it would seem, somewhat lost his way—near Evander's city, on the banks of Tiber. He was hospitably entertained by the Arcadian; and his cattle meanwhile wandered at their will over the fields. Next morning he missed two of the bulls. It seemed in vain to search for them. They had been stolen, indeed, but the robber had dragged them tail-foremost into his cave, and the device was sufficient to puzzle the simple-minded hero. The robber was Cacus, the terror of the Aventine forest, a son of Vulcan, huge of frame, and strong as he was huge, whose dwelling was in a cave, which even the wild beasts could hardly find, its entrance hideous with limbs and heads of men, and its floor white with human bones. Hercules was about to depart, when the bellowing of the imprisoned oxen reached him. Guided by the sound, he found the cave. Cacus had blocked the entrance with a large mass of rock, which even five yoke of oxen could scarcely have stirred. But the shoulders that had supported the heavens were equal to the task. The rock gave way, and the robber had to fight for his prey and his life. First with fists, then with stones and sticks he fought, and finding himself worsted, had recourse to his father's aid, and vomited forth fire in the face of the foe. All was in vain; the knotted club descended, and the monster fell dying on the ground. The victor sacrificed one of the cattle to Jupiter, and left a memorial of himself in the ox-market, the name of which was traced, not to the commonplace explanation of its use, but to the animal which the victorious son of Jupiter had there sacrificed to his sire.

What remains in the book may be passed over with brief notice. The thirteenth of the month was distinguished as the day on which Augustus had amused the Roman people, and gratified his own passion for veiling despotism under republican forms, by restoring to the senate the control of the

provinces in which peace had been restored. On the eighteenth was commemorated the dedication of the Temple of Concord, first made when Camillus had reconciled contending orders in the State, and renewed by Tiberius after completing his German conquests. A memorable holiday, that of the "sowing day," was fixed at the discretion of the pontiff, near the end of the month. The thirtieth commemorated the dedication of the altar to Peace, and afforded the poet yet another opportunity of offering his homage to the house of Augustus:—

> Her tresses bound with Actium's [1] crown of bay,
> Peace comes; in all the world, sweet goddess, stay!
> Her altar flames, ye priests, with incense feed,
> Bid 'neath the axe the snow-white victim bleed!
> Pray willing heaven, that Cæsar's house may stand,
> Long as the peace it gives a wearied land!

It would weary the reader, even did space permit, to go in like detail through the poet's account of each month. He begins each with an attempt to determine the etymology of its name. That of February, he tells us, was to be found in the word *februa,* a name given by the Romans of old to certain offerings of a purifying and expiatory nature used at this time. The purification of the flocks and herds, as well as of human beings, was a very important element in the religious life of Rome; and the words *lustrum* and *lustratio,* which denote certain forms of purification, are well known to every student of Roman history. February is therefore the "purifying" month; and its name thus testifies to a widespread belief in the need of cleansing and expiation. March, of course, takes its name from the god Mars, the father of Rome's legendary founder. For April the poet gives a fanciful etymology. "Spring," he says, "opens" (*aperit*) "all things;" and so, he adds, "April, according to tradition, means the 'open' time" (*apertum tempus*). It is the time

[1] At the battle of Actium (fought B.C. 31) the civil wars which had raged at intervals for more than sixty years were brought to a final close by the victory of Octavius Cæsar over his rival Antony.

of love; and Venus during this month is in the ascendant, "the goddess who is all-powerful in earth, in heaven, in sea." For the next month, May, Ovid confesses that he had no satisfactory theory to offer as to its name. He suggests that it is formed from the root of *major* and *majestas*. "May," he says, "is the month for old men; and its special function is to teach the young reverence for age. "Majestas," indeed, was regarded, after Roman fashion—which delighted in real personifications—as a divinity, whom Romulus and Numa worshipped as the upholder of filial reverence and obedience, and also as the rightful disposer of the offices and honours of the State in their due order. With this divinity the month of May was associated. June is Juno's month, though Ovid admits that the explanation is doubtful. He represents the goddess as appearing to him in a secluded grove when he was pondering within himself on the origin of the name. She tells him that, as he has undertaken to celebrate in his verse the religious festivals of Rome, he has thereby won for himself the privilege of beholding the divine essence. As she was both the wife and sister of Jupiter, her month would speak to the public of Rome of the marriage-tie and of family-bonds. With the sixth book the Fasti, as we have them, come to an end.

The name having been thus accounted for, astronomical occurrences, religious ceremonies, matters of ritual, the anniversaries of the dedications of temples and altars, and the like, are duly recorded, the poet availing himself of every opportunity to introduce some historical or mythological legend. They are the most attractive part of the work, for Ovid is always happy in narrative. Among the most noticeable of the historical class is the tale of the three hundred and six Fabii who fell on the plains of Veii, in the battle of the Cremera, fighting with an heroic courage, in which Roman patriotism found a match for the great deed of Leonidas and his three hundred Spartans at Thermopylæ. Indeed, though it would be rash to deny altogether the genuineness of the narrative, there is something suspicious about the Roman legend. The historians of Rome had indeed a singular power of embellishment and invention, and it is not doing them any

injustice to suppose that the original story, whatever it may have been, grew somewhat beneath their hands. The legend, to which the reader may give such credence as he pleases, runs thus:—

In the early days of the Commonwealth, Rome was troubled much by dissension at home, and by the attacks of her Etruscan neighbours on the north. The great house of the Fabii had fallen into disfavour with their countrymen. What could they do better than at once rid the city of a presence which was no longer welcome, while they served their country by attacking its enemies abroad? So they go forth, a little band, wholly composed of men of the Fabian race. "One house," says the poet, "had taken on itself the whole might and burden of Rome: any one of them was worthy to be a commander." They cross the Cremera, one of the tributaries of the Tiber, a little stream then swollen by the melting of the snows of winter. The enemy fly before them; they penetrate into a wooded plain well fitted for the treacherous ambuscade. "Whither do ye rush, O noble house? to your peril do you trust the foe. Simple-hearted nobility, beware of the weapons of treachery!" All in a moment the enemy issue from the woods, and escape is utterly cut off. "What can a few brave heroes do against so many thousands? What resource is left them in so dire a crisis?" But the Fabii did not die unavenged: "as the boar in the forests of Laurentum, when at last brought to bay, deals havoc among the hounds," so these intrepid warriors fall amid a multitude of slain foes. "Thus," as the poet says, "a single day sent forth all the Fabii to the war; a single day destroyed them all." But one of the family was left, a stripling, who could not as yet bear arms. This was a special providence. The gods took care that the house descended from Hercules should not be utterly extinguished. It had a great destiny before it. "The stripling was preserved," the poet says, "that he who was surnamed Maximus, as Hannibal's formidable antagonist, might hereafter be born," the man who, by his policy of delay (*cunctando*, whence his surname of Cunctator), was to restore the fortunes of Rome.

Another well-told legend is that of the translation and

deification of Romulus. "When his father, mighty in arms, saw the new walls of the city completed, and many a war ended by his son's prowess, he uttered this prayer to Jupiter: 'Rome's power now is firmly planted; she needs not my child's help. Restore the son to the father; though one has perished, I shall still have one left me in his own stead and in the stead of Remus. There will be one for thee to raise to the azure vault of heaven: thou hast spoken the word; Jove's word must be fulfilled.'" The prayer was at once granted, and, amid parting clouds, the king, while he was in the act of administering justice to his people, was carried up with peals of thunder and lightning-flashes into the heavens, on his father's steeds. The grief of Rome was solaced by a vision of the departed hero, who appeared to one of the Julii as he was on his way from Alba Longa. "Suddenly, with a crash, the clouds on his left hand parted asunder; he drew back, and his hair stood on end. Romulus seemed to stand before him—a grand and more than human figure, adorned with the robe of state. He seemed to say, Forbid Rome's citizens to mourn; their tears must not insult my divinity. Let them offer incense and worship a new god, Quirinus, and pursue their country's arts and the soldier's work."

Sometimes the poet takes his readers into the obscurer bypaths of the old Italian mythology. We meet with the names of divinities which, to the ordinary reader, are altogether unfamiliar. Such a name is that of Anna Perenna, a deified sister of the Phœnician Dido, according to the accounts both of Virgil and Ovid. She was a river-nymph, and to this her name Perenna (everlasting) was meant to point. Her story is related at great length by Ovid. Her yearly festival, it appears, was celebrated on the Ides of March, and was a somewhat grotesque ceremony. The populace had a sort of picnic on the grassy banks of the Tiber, and indulged themselves very freely. Indeed there was a distinct motive to drink without stint, as it was the custom to pray for as many years of life as they had drunk cups of wine. The connection between the two is not to us very obvious; but, if we may trust Ovid, there were those who would drink out the years of long-lived Nestor in the hope of attaining that worthy's

age. The celebrants sang all the songs they had heard at the theatre, and, having drunk and sung to their heart's content, they had a merry dance.

Ovid ends his account of this Anna Perenna with an amusing little story about her. When she had been made a goddess, Mars paid her a visit, and had some private conversation with her. "You are worshipped," he said, "in my month; I have great hopes from your kind assistance. I am on fire with love of Minerva; we both of us bear arms, and long have I been cherishing my passion. Contrive that, as we follow the same pursuit, we may be united. The part well becomes you, O good-natured old woman!" Anna professed her willingness to help the god of war, and undertook the delicate business of arranging a meeting. However, for a time she put him off with promises; but at last the ardent lover was, as he thought, to be gratified. So the god hurried off to meet the object of his affections; but when in his impatience he raised her veil, and was about to snatch a kiss, he found that Anna had played him a trick, and had dressed herself up as Minerva. He was naturally angry and ashamed of himself, all the more so as the new goddess laughed him to scorn, and as his old flame Venus thoroughly enjoyed the joke. It appears that this legendary hoax, which Ovid tells in his best way, gave occasion to a number of sly and humorous sayings among the merry people on the banks of the Tiber. It was, no doubt, great fun for them to think of the august deity to whom their city owed its founder and first king, having been "sold" in such a fashion.

The Tristia, or the "Sorrows"

Ovid's pen was not idle during the melancholy years of exile which closed his life. In addition to revising the "Metamorphoses" and adding to the "Fasti," he composed in their entirety the "Sorrows," the "Letters from the Pontus," and the "Ibis."

In the "Sorrows" and the "Letters from the Pontus" Ovid pours forth in an increasing stream his complaints against the cruelty of fate and the miseries of his exile; his supplica-

tions for the removal, or at least the mitigation of his sentence; and his entreaties to those who had known him in his prosperity, that they would help, or, if help was impossible, would at least remember their fallen friend. It must be confessed that they lack the brilliancy of the earlier poems. The genius of the poet stagnated, as he says himself, in the inclement climate, and amidst the barbarous associations of his place of exile. And the reader is wearied by the garrulous monotony of nearly six thousand verses, in which the absorbing subject of the poet's own sorrows is only exchanged for flattery—all the more repulsive because we know it to have been unavailing—of the ruler from whose anger or policy he was suffering. Yet there are not wanting points of interest. There are graphic sketches of scenery and character touches of pathos, here and there even a gleam of humour, and sometimes, when the occasion brings him to speak of his own genius, and of the fame to which he looked forward, an assertion of independence and dignity, which is infinitely refreshing amidst his unmanly repining against his fate, and the yet more unmanly adulations by which he hoped to escape it.

The first book of the "Sorrows" was written and despatched to Rome before Ovid had reached his allotted place of banishment. A preface commends to all who still remembered him at Rome the little volume, which would remind them of the banished Ovid. It was to go in the guise that became an exile's book. It was to be without the ornaments which distinguished more fortunate volumes. A characteristic passage tells us what these ornaments were, and gives us as good an idea as we can anywhere get of the appearance of a Roman book. The parchment or paper, on the inner side of which was the writing, was tinted on the outer of a warm and pleasing colour, by means of saffron or cedar-oil. The title of the book was written in vermilion letters. The stick round which the roll was made had bosses of ivory, or some other ornamental material, and the ends of the roll were polished and coloured black. Any erasure was considered to be a great disfigurement: of such disfigurement the poet's book was not to be ashamed. Every reader would understand

that sufficient cause was found in the author's tears, and for that excuse the blots.

Nowhere throughout the "Sorrows" does Ovid venture to name any one of his friends to whom he addressed the various poems of which the several books are composed. His wife only is excepted. If any peril had ever threatened her, it had now passed. Indeed, if the poet is to be believed, she desired nothing more than that she should be allowed to share her husband's exile. But it was evidently a perilous thing for friends of the banished man to be supposed to keep up any intercourse with him. Time, though it brought no relaxation to the severity of the punishment, seemed to have removed something of the bitterness with which the poet's name was regarded at Rome. The "Letters from the Pontus" are addressed by name to various friends, and we find from them that, instead of the two or three faithful hearts who alone were left to the fallen man in the early days of his ruin, he had during the latter years of his exile a goodly number of correspondents.

Of the second poem in the book, describing the imminent peril of shipwreck in which he found himself on his voyage from Italy, mention has already been made. He returns to the same subject in the fourth elegy, mentioning, not without a certain pathos, that the adverse winds had driven him back within sight of that Italy on which it was forbidden him again to set foot.

The fourth poem describes his departure from his home. The fifth makes one of the many fruitless appeals for help which Ovid continued throughout the weary years of his banishment to address to any friend whom he thought sufficiently bold to intercede on his behalf with the offended Cæsar. An elegy addressed to his wife,—the first of many poems in which he warmly expresses his gratitude for the devotion with which she was defending his interests against enemies and faithless friends; another, addressed to a friend, commending to his notice the book of the Metamorphoses, and excusing, on the ground of the sudden interruption caused by the author's banishment, its many imperfections; and a pathetic remonstrance with one who had once professed a great friend-

ship for him, but had deserted him in his hour of need,—these, with two other poems, complete the first book of the "Sorrows."

It may be noticed, as a proof of the popularity which the poet had attained, that the friend whom Ovid addresses was accustomed to wear in a ring a gem engraved with Ovid's portrait. Gems were in one sense what miniatures were to the last generation, and what photographs are to ourselves; but both the material and the process of engraving were costly, and it is probable that it was only persons of some note who enjoyed the distinction of having their features thus perpetuated. There is a traditionary likeness of Ovid, which may possibly have come down to us in this way. It is a curious fact that, thanks to this art of gem-engraving, we are well acquainted with the faces of men separated from us by twenty centuries and more, while the outward semblance of those who are within three or four hundred years of our own time has been irrecoverably lost.

The second book of the "Sorrows" is an elaborate *Apologia pro vita sua* [Defence of his life], addressed to Augustus. He hopes that, as verse had been his ruin, so verse might help ameliorate his condition. "The emperor himself had acknowledged its power. At his bidding the Roman matrons had chanted the song of praise to Cybele; and he had ordered the hymns which at Secular Games had been raised to Phœbus. Might he not hope that the wrath of the terrestrial god might be propitiated in the same way? To pardon was the prerogative of deity. Jupiter himself, when he had hurled his thunders, allowed the clear sky again to be seen. And who had been more merciful than Augustus? Ovid had seen many promoted to wealth and power who had borne arms against him. No such guilt had been the poet's. He had never forgotten to offer his prayers for the ruler of Rome, had never failed to sing his praises. And had he not received the emperor's approval? When the knights had passed in review before him, the poet's horse had been duly restored to him.[1] Nay,

[1] A knight disgraced by the censor (the emperor was perpetual censor) had his horse taken from him.

he had filled high stations of responsibility, had been a member of the Court of the Hundred, and even of the Council of Ten, which presided over it. And all had been ruined by an unhappy mistake! Yet the emperor had been merciful. Life had been spared to him, and his paternal property. No decree of the senate or of any judge had condemned him to banishment. The emperor had avenged his own wrongs by an exercise of his own power, but avenged them with a punishment so much milder than it might have been, as to leave him hopes for the future."

These hopes he proceeds to commend to the emperor by elaborate flattery. He appeals successively to the gods, who, if they loved Rome, would prolong the days of its lord; to the country, which would always be grateful for the blessings of his rule; to Livia, the one wife who was worthy of him, and for whom he was the one worthy husband; to the triumphs which his grandsons[1] were winning in his name and under his auspices; and implores that if return may not be granted to him, at least some milder exile may be conceded. Here he was on the very verge of the empire, and within reach of its enemies. Was it well that a Roman citizen should be in peril of captivity among barbarous tribes? Ovid then proceeds to set forth an apology for his offending poems. To the real cause of his banishment he makes one brief allusion. More he dared not say. "I am not worth so much as that I should renew your wounds, O Cæsar: it is far too much that you should once have felt the pang."

It is needless to examine the Apology in detail. The sum and substance of it is, that the poems were written for those to whom they could not possibly do any harm; that readers to whose modesty they might be likely to do an injury had been expressly warned off from them; that a mind perversely disposed would find evil anywhere, even in the most sacred legends; that, if everything whence the opportunity for wrong might arise was to be condemned, the theatre, the circus, the temples with their porticoes so convenient for forbidden meet-

[1] Drusus, the son, and Germanicus the nephew and adopted son of Tiberius, Augustus's step-son.

ings, and their associations so strangely tinged with licence, would share the same fate. As for himself, his life had been pure but for this one fault; and this fault how many had committed before him! Then follows a long list of poets, who, if to sing of love was an offence, had been grievous offenders. Then there had been poems on dice-playing, and dice had been a grievous offence in the old days. All verses that taught men how to waste that precious thing time,—verses about swimming, about ball-playing, about the trundling of hoops (a favourite amusement, it would seem, even with middle-aged Romans), about the furnishings of the table and its etiquette, about the different kinds of earthenware (the fancy for curious pots and pans was, it will be seen, in full force among the wealthy Romans of Ovid's time),—might be condemned. Plays, too, and pictures were grievous offenders in the same way. Why should Ovid be the only one to suffer?—Ovid, too, who had written grave and serious works which no one could censure, and who had never wronged any man by slanderous verses, over whose fall no one rejoiced, but many had mourned.

> "Permit these pleas thy mighty will to sway,
> Great Lord, thy country's Father, Hope, and Stay!
> Return I ask not; though at last thy heart,
> Touched by long suffering, may the boon impart;
> Let not the penalty the fault exceed:
> Exile I bear; for peace, for life I plead."

It is probable that the poem was despatched to Rome immediately after its author had reached Tomi. He would not have ventured to put in a plea for the mitigation of punishment before he had at least begun to suffer it; but it is equally certain that the plea would not be long delayed. The third book of the "Sorrows" was likewise composed and sent off during the first year of his banishment. The twelfth out of its fourteen elegies speaks of the return of spring. The winter of the Pontus, longer than any that he had known before, had passed away; lads and lasses in happier lands were gathering violets; the swallow was building under the eaves; vineyard and forest—strangers, alas! both of them,

to the land of the Getæ—were bursting into leaf. And in Rome's happier place, which he might never see again, all the athletic sports of the Campus, all the gay spectacles of the theatre, were being enjoyed. The poet's only solace was that, as even in these dismal regions spring brought some relief, and opened the sea to navigation, some ship might reach the shore and bring news of Italy and of Cæsar's triumphs.

The next elegy must have been written about the same time. Ovid's birthday (we know it to have been the 20th of March) came, the first that had visited him in his exile. "Would that thou hadst brought," he says, "not an addition but an end to my pain!

"What dost thou here? Has angry Cæsar sent
Thee too to share my hopeless banishment?
Think'st thou to find the customary rite—
To see, the while I stand in festive white,
With flowery wreaths the smoking altars crowned,
And hear in spicy flames the salt meal's crackling sound?
Shall honeyed cakes do honour to the day,
While I in words of happy omen pray?
Not such my lot. A cruel fate and stern
Forbids me thus to welcome thy return;
With gloomy cypress be my altars dight,
And flames prepared the funeral flames to light!
I burn no incense to unheeding skies,—
From heart so sad no words of blessing rise;
If yet for me one fitting prayer remain,
'Tis this: Return not to these shores again!"

The gloom of his lot was aggravated by causes of which he bitterly complains in more than one of his poems. In the third elegy, which he addressed to his wife, she must not wonder that the letter was written in a strange hand. He had been grievously, even dangerously, ill. The climate did not suit him; nor the water (Ovid seems to have been a water-drinker), nor the soil. He had not a decent house to cover his head; there was no food that could suit a sick man's appetite. No physician could be found to prescribe for his malady. There was not even a friend who could

while away the time by conversation or reading. He felt, he complains in another letter, a constant lassitude, which extended from his body to his mind. Perpetual sleeplessness troubled him; his food gave him no nourishment; he was wasted away almost to a skeleton.

Writing about two years after this time, he assumes a more cheerful tone. His health was restored. He had become hardened to the climate. If it were not for his mental trouble, all would be well. Another pressing matter was anxiety about his literary reputation, which the offended authorities at home were doing their best to extinguish. He imagines his little book making its way with trembling steps through the well-known scenes of the capital. It goes to the temple of Apollo, where the works of authors old and new were open for the inspection of readers. There it looks for its brothers,—not the luckless poem which had excited the wrath of Cæsar, and which their father wished he had never begotten, but the unoffending others. Alas! they were all absent; and even while it looked, the guardian of the place bade it begone. Nor was it more successful in the neighbouring library of the temple of Liberty. Banished from public, its only resource was to find shelter from private friendship. To such shelter, accordingly, the volume is commended in the last elegy of the book. This friend was, it seems, a patron of literature,—"a lover of new poets," Ovid calls him. And the author begs his favour and care for his latest work. Only he must not look for too much. Everything was against him in that barbarous land. The wonder was that he could write at all. "There is no supply of books here to rouse and nurture my mind; instead of books, there is the clash of swords and the bow. There is no one in the country to give me, should I read to him my verses, an intelligent hearing. There is no place to which I can retire. The closely-guarded walls and fast-shut gate keep out the hostile Getæ. Often I look for a word, for a name, for a place, and there is no one to help me to it; often (I am ashamed to confess it) when I try to say something, words fail me; I find that I have forgotten how to speak. On every side of me I hear the sound of Thracian and Scythian tongues. I almost believe that I

could write in Getic measures. Nay, believe me, I sometimes fear lest Pontic words should be found mixed with my Latin."

We have the same complaints and fears repeated in the fifth book. After some uncomplimentary expressions about the savage manners of the people, and their equally savage dress and appearance,—the furs and loose trousers by which they sought, but with ill success, to keep out the cold, and their long and shaggy beards,—he goes on to speak about the language:—

> "Among a few remain traces of the Greek tongue, but even these corrupted with Getic accent. There is scarcely a man among the people who by any chance can give you an answer on any matter in Latin. I, the Roman bard, am compelled—pardon me, O Muses! —to speak for the most part after Sarmatian fashion. I am ashamed of it, and I own it; by this time, from long disuse, I myself can scarcely recall Latin words. And I do not doubt but that there are not a few barbarisms in this little book. It is not the fault of the writer, but of the place."

One of the elegies in the third book has been already noticed. It is addressed to Perilla, and the question whether this lady was, as some commentators suppose, the daughter of the poet, has been briefly discussed. It begins: "Go, letter, hastily penned, to salute Perilla, the faithful messenger of my words; you will find her either sitting with her dear mother, or among her books and Muses." He reminds her of how he had been her teacher in the art of verse, and tells her that if her genius remained still as vivid as of old, only Sappho would excel her. Let her not be terrified by his own sad fate; only she must beware of perilous subjects. Then follows a noble vindication of his art, and of the dignity which it gave to him, its humble follower:—

> Long years will mar those looks so comely now,
> And age will write its wrinkles on thy brow.
> Mark how it comes with fatal, noiseless pace,
> To spoil the blooming honours of thy face!
> Soon men will say, and thou wilt hear with pain,
> "Surely she once was lovely;" and in vain,

That thy too faithful glass is false, complain.
Small are thy riches, though the loftiest state
Would suit thee well; but be they small or great,
Chance takes and brings them still with fickle wing—
To-day a beggar, yesterday a king.
Why name each good? Each has its little day;
Gifts of the soul alone defy decay.
I live of friends, of country, home, bereft,—
All I could lose, but genius still is left;
This is my solace, this my constant friend;
Ere this be reached e'en Cæsar's power must end.

It is needless to go on in detail through what remains of the "Sorrows." The tenth poem of the fourth book should be mentioned as being a brief autobiography of the poet. Elsewhere he pursues, with an iteration which would be wearying in the extreme but for his marvellous power of saying the same thing in many ways, the old subjects. The hardships of his lot, the fidelity or faithfulness of his friends, the solace which art supplied him, and the effort to discover some way of propitiating those who held his fate in their hands,—these topics occupy in turn his pen. The following elegant translation by the late Mr. Philip Stanhope Worsley, of one of the latest poems of the book, may serve as a good specimen of his verse:—

"Study the mournful hours away,
Lest in dull sloth thy spirit pine;"
Hard words thou writest: verse is gay,
And asks a lighter heart than mine.

No calms my stormy life beguile,
Than mine can be no sadder chance;
You bid bereavèd Priam smile,
And Niobe, the childless, dance.

Is grief or study more my part,
Whose lief is doomed to wilds like these?
Though you should make my feeble heart
Strong with the strength of Socrates,

Such ruin would crush wisdom down;
Stronger than man is wrath divine.
That sage, whom Phœbus gave the crown,
Never could write in grief like mine.

Can I my land and thee forget,
Nor the felt sorrow wound my breast?
Say that I can—but foes beset
This place, and rob me of all rest.

Add that my mind hath rusted now,
And fallen far from what it was.
The land, though rich, that lacks the plough
Is barren, save of thorns and grass.

The horse, that long hath idle stood,
Is soon o'ertaken in the race;
And, torn from its familiar flood,
The chinky pinnace rots apace.

Nor hope that I, before but mean,
Can to my former self return;
Long sense of ills hath bruised my brain,
Half the old fires no longer burn.

Yet oft I take the pen and try,
As now, to build the measured rhyme.
Words come not, or, as meet thine eye,
Words worthy of their place and time.

Last, glory cheers the heart that fails,
And love of praise inspires the mind—
I followed once Fame's star, my sails
Filled with a favourable wind:

But now 'tis not so well with me,
To care if fame be lost or won:
Nay, but I would, if that might be,
Live all unknown beneath the sun.

The Letters from the Pontus

The "Letters" number forty-four in all, and are contained in four books. They are arranged in chronological

order—an order, however, which is not absolutely exact. The earliest of them dates from the same year to which the fifth book of the "Sorrows" is to be attributed. In the prefatory epistle, addressed to Brutus—a relative, it is probable, of the famous tyrannicide—the poet tells his friend that he will find the new book as full of sorrows as its predecessor. It contains, however, not a few indications that his position had been somewhat changed—and changed for the better.

He had not ventured to prefix to the various poems of which the "Sorrows" were made up the names of those to whom they were addressed. This he does not now scruple to do; and we find accordingly that, instead of the two or three who, he complains in the earlier book, had alone been left to him out of a crowd of companions, there was no inconsiderable number of friends who were willing to remember, and even, if it might be, to help him. We may count as many as twenty names; not reckoning Germanicus Cæsar, to whom Ovid addresses a complimentary letter, and Cotys, a tributary king, the boundaries of whose dominions were not far from Tomi.

While the revival of these old friendships consoled the poet, and even buoyed him up with hopes that his banishment might be terminated, or at least mitigated, by a change of scene, the place itself was becoming (though, indeed, he is scarcely willing to allow it) less odious to him: its semi-barbarous inhabitants were not insensible to the honour of having so distinguished a resident among them; and his own behaviour, as he tells one of his correspondents, had made a favourable impression on them. "They would rather that I left them," he says, "because they see that I wish to do so; but as far as regards themselves, they like me to be here. Do not take all this on my word; you may see the decrees of the town, which speak in my praise, and make me free of all taxes. Such honours are scarcely suitable to a miserable fugitive like myself; but the neighbouring towns have bestowed on me the same privilege." The sympathising people might well complain that their kindness was repaid with ingratitude, when their fellow-townsman continued to speak with unmitigated abhorrence of the place to which he had been con-

demned. "I care for nothing," he says, still harping on the constant theme of his verse, to one of his distant friends, "but to get out of this place. Even the Styx—if there is a Styx—would be a good exchange for the Danube; yes, and anything, if such the world contain, that is below the Styx itself. The plough-land less hates the weed, the swallow less hates the frost, than Naso hates the regions which border on the war-loving Getæ. Such words as these make the people of Tomi wroth with me. The public anger is stirred up by my verse. Shall I never cease to be injured by my song? Shall I always suffer from my imprudent genius? Why do I hesitate to lop off my fingers, and so make writing impossible? why do I take again, in my folly, to the warfare which has damaged me before? Yet I have done no wrong. It is no fault of mine, men of Tomi; you I love, though I cordially hate your country. Let any one search the record of my toils —there is no letter in complaint of you. It is the cold—it is the attack that we have to dread on all sides—it is the assaults that the enemy make on our walls, that I complain of. It was against the place, not against the people, that I made the charge. You yourselves often blame your own country. . . . It is a malicious interpreter that stirs up the anger of the people against me, and brings a new charge against my verse. I wish that I was as fortunate as I am honest in heart. There does not live a man whom my words have wronged. Nay, were I blacker than Illyrian pitch, I could not wrong so loyal a people as you. The kindness with which you have received me in my troubles shows, men of Tomi, that a people so gentle must be genuine Greeks.[1] My own people, the Peligni, and Sulmo, the land of my home, could not have behaved more kindly in my troubles. Honours which you would scarcely give to the prosperous and unharmed, you have lately bestowed upon me. I am the only inhabitant —one only excepted, who held the privilege of legal right— that has been exempted from public burdens. My temples have been crowned with the sacred chaplet, lately voted to

[1] This was a compliment which would be certain to please a half-bred population like that of the old colony.

me, against my will, by the favour of the people. Dear, then, as to Latona was that Delian land, the only spot which gave a safe refuge to the wanderer, so dear is Tomi to me—Tomi which down to this day remains a faithful host to one who has been banished from his native land! If only the gods had granted that it might have some hope of peace and quiet, and that it were a little further removed from the frosts of the pole!"

The poet, though he could not restrain or moderate his complaints about the miseries of his exile, did his best to make a return for these honours and hospitalities. "I am ashamed to say it," he writes to Carus, a scholar of distinction, who had been appointed tutor to the children of Germanicus, "but I have written a book in the language of the Getæ; I have arranged their barbarous words in Roman measures. I was happy enough to please (congratulate me on the success); nay, I begin to have the reputation of a poet among these uncivilised Getæ. Do you ask me my subject? I sang the praises of Cæsar. I was assisted in my novel attempt by the power of the god. I told them how that the body of Father Augustus was mortal, while his divinity had departed to the dwellings of heaven. I told them how there was one equal in virtue to his father, who, under compulsion, had assumed the reigns of an empire which he had often refused. I told them that thou, Livia, art the Vesta of modest matrons, of whom it cannot be determined whether thou art more worthy of thy husband or thy son. I told them that there were two youths, firm supporters of their father, who have given some pledges of their spirit. When I had read this to the end, written as it was in the verse of another tongue, and the last page had been turned by my fingers, all nodded their heads, all shook their full quivers, and a prolonged murmur of applause came from the Getic crowd; and some cried, 'Since you write such things about Cæsar, you should have been restored to Cæsar's empire.' So he spake; but alas, my Carus! the sixth winter sees me still an exile beneath the snowy sky."

It is to this subject of his exile that in the "Letters," as in the "Sorrows," he returns with a mournful and wearisome iteration. The greater number of them belong to the fifty-fifth

and fifty-sixth years of the poet's life. The fifth of the last book, for instance, is addressed to "Sextus Pompeius, now Consul." Pompeius, who was collaterally related to the great rival of Cæsar, entered on his consulship on January 1st, A.D. 14. "Go, trivial elegy, to our consul's learned ears! take words for that honoured man to read. The way is long, and you go with halting feet.[1] And the earth lies hidden, covered with snows of winter. When you shall have crossed frosty Thrace, and Hænus covered with clouds, and the waters of the Ionian Sea, you will come to the imperial city in less than ten days, even though you do not hasten your journey."

The letter marks the time at which Ovid's hopes of pardon had risen to their highest. Powerful friends had interceded for him; with one of them advanced to the consulship—a token of high favour, though nothing but a shadow of power—he might hope for the best. And it is probable, as has been before explained, that Augustus was at this very time meditating nothing less than another disposition of the imperial power,—a disposition which would have reinstated in their position his own direct descendants, and with them have restored the fortunes of Ovid. These hopes were to be disappointed. On the 29th of August in the same year, Augustus died at Nola, in Campania. There were some who declared that his end was at least hastened by Livia, determined to secure at any price the prospects of her son Tiberius. As the emperor had completed his seventy-sixth year, it is unnecessary thus to account for a death which, though it may have been opportune, was certainly to be expected.

On Ovid's fortunes the effect was disastrous. The very next letter is that which has been already quoted as deploring the death of Augustus at the very time when he was beginning to entertain milder thoughts, and the ruin which had overtaken his old friend and patron, Fabius Maximus. Ovid, however, did not yet abandon all hope. To address directly

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[1] This is a favourite witticism with Ovid. The elegiac couplet was made up of two feet of unequal length—the hexameter or six-foot, and the pentameter or five-foot verse. Hence it was said to halt.

Tiberius or Livia seemed useless. His thoughts turned to the young Germanicus, Tiberius's nephew, whose wife was Agrippina, daughter of the elder and sister of the younger Julia. Among the friends of this prince, who was then in command of the armies of the Rhine—and, though an object of suspicion to his uncle and adopting father, high in popular favour—was P. Suillius Rufus. Suillius was closely connected with Ovid, whose step-daughter (the daughter of his third wife) he had married. He must then have been a young man, as it is more than forty years afterwards that we hear of his being banished by Nero; and he filled the part of quæstor (an office of a financial kind) on the staff of Germanicus. "If you shall feel a hope," Ovid writes, "that anything can be done by prayer, entreat with suppliant voice the gods whom you worship. Thy gods are the youthful Cæsar; make propitious these by deities. Surely no altar is more familiar to you than this. That does not allow the prayers of any of its ministers to be in vain; from hence seek thou help for my fortunes. If it should help, with however small a breeze, my sinking boat will rise again from the midst of the waters. Thou wilt bring due incense to the devouring flames, and testify how strong the gods can be." The writer then addresses, and continues to address throughout the rest of the letter, Germanicus himself, for whose eye it was of course intended, and before whom Suillius is entreated in the concluding couplet by his "almost father-in-law," as Ovid quaintly calls himself, to bring it.

Another friend, whose intercession in the same quarter the poet entreats, is Carus—tutor, as has been said before, to the sons of Germanicus. This letter was written in "the sixth winter of exile"—*i.e.*, about the end of A.D. 14 or the beginning of 15—the time to which we are to ascribe the poem in the Getic language, on the death and deification of Augustus. Shortly afterwards must have been written a letter addressed to Græcinus, who filled the office of consul during the second half of the latter year. Here we see the most humiliating phase of Ovid's servility. It is difficult to understand how little more than fifty years after the republic had ceased to exist, an Italian of the Italians, one of that hardy Samnite

race which had so long contended on equal terms with Rome itself, could be found descending to such depths of degradation. The servile multitudes of Egypt and Assyria had never prostrated themselves more ignobly before Sesostris or Nimrod than did this free-born citizen before the men who were so relentlessly persecuting him. He tells his powerful friend that his piety was known to the whole country. "This stranger land sees that there is in my dwelling a chapel to Cæsar. There stand along with him his pious son and his priestess spouse, powers not inferior to the already perfected deity. And that no part of the family should be wanting, there stand both his grandsons, the one close to his grandmother's, and the other to his father's side. To these I address words of prayer with an offering of incense as often as the day arises from the eastern sky." [1]

Two years before, we find him thanking his friend Maximus Cotta for a present of the statues which this chapel enshrined. He mentions three as the number which had been sent. (The images of the two young princes had since been added.) In this letter he seems to lose himself in transports of gratitude. "He is no longer an exile at the ends of the earth. He is a prosperous dweller in the midst of the capital. He sees the faces of the Cæsars. Such happiness he had never ventured to hope for." And so he treads the well-worn round of customary adulation. A short specimen will be enough to show to what depths he could descend. "Happy they who look not on the likenesses but on the reality; who see before their eyes the very bodies of the god! Since a hard fate has denied me this privilege, I worship those whom art has granted to my prayer—the likeness of the true. 'Tis thus men know the gods, whom the heights of heaven conceal; 'tis thus that the shape of Jupiter is worshipped for Jupiter himself." And then, anxious not to forget the practical object to which all

[1] It may be as well to explain that by Cæsar is meant Augustus (who is now dead), and by the "pious son" Tiberius. Livia, as the widow of the deified prince, was the priestess of his worship; the two grandsons are Drusus, son of Tiberius, who stands by his grandmother Livia—and Germanicus, who stands by his adopting father Tiberius.

these elaborate flatteries are directed, he goes on: "Take care that this semblance of yours which is with me, shall ever be with me, be not found in a hostile spot. My head shall sooner part from the neck, the eye shall sooner leave the mangled cheeks, than I should bear your loss, O Deities of the Commonwealth! you shall be the harbour and the sanctuary of my banishment. You will embrace, if I be surrounded by Getic arms. You, as my eagles and my standards, I will follow. If I am not deceived and cheated by too powerful a desire, the hope of a happier place of exile is at hand. The look upon your likeness is less and less gloomy; the face seems to give assent to my prayer. I pray that the presages of my anxious heart may be true, and that the anger of my god, however just it is, may yet be mitigated."

It is difficult to conceive a more pitiable sight than that of the wretched exile day after day going through, with sinking hopes and failing spirits, this miserable pretence of worship; prostrating himself before men whose baseness and profligacy no one knew better than himself, and, while he crushed down the curses that rose naturally to his lips, reiterating the lying prayer, for which he must have now despaired of an answer. That he should have performed this elaborate hypocrisy, not in public but in the privacy of his own home, merely for the sake of being able to say that he had done it, and with but the very dimmest hope of getting any good from it, is inexpressibly pitiable; and that it should be possible for a man of genius to stoop to such degradation, and for great princes, as Augustus and Tiberius certainly were, to be swayed in their purpose by such an exhibition—and that they might be swayed by it Ovid certainly believed—is a warning against the evils of despotic power such as it would not be easy to match.

Of the literary merits of the "Letters from the Pontus" there is little to be said. The monotony of its subject was fatal to excellence. Ovid knew, at least as well as any man who ever wrote, how to say the same thing over and over again in different ways; but even his genius could not indefinitely vary his constant complaint that he was living among savages, and under an inhospitable sky; his constant prayer

that he might be released from his gloomy prison, or, at least, transferred to a more genial spot. Nor does he vary his subject with the episodical narratives in the telling of which he so much excelled. The story of Orestes and Pylades is the only specimen of the kind that occurs in the four books. It is so well known that a very few words may suffice for it. Orestes and Pylades land at Tauri, and, according to the custom of the place, are seized and taken to the temple of Diana. There one of them must be offered to the goddess. Each is anxious to be the object of the fatal choice. While they are contending, they find that the priestess is the sister of Orestes, Iphigenia, who had been transported hither from the altar at Aulis, where she had been about to suffer a similar fate. By her help they escape.

Ovid put this story into the mouth of an old native of the country, who speaks of having himself seen the temple where the incident happened, towering high with its vast columns, and approached by an ascent of twelve steps.

The Ibis

The "Ibis" is a poem of between six and seven hundred lines in length, containing almost as many imprecations, displaying in their variety an amazing fertility of imagination, which are directed against a personal enemy who had spoken ill of the poet in his banishment, had persecuted his wife with his attentions, and had endeavoured to snatch some plunder from his property. The person whom Ovid attacked under the name of Ibis is said to have been one Hyginus, a freedman of the Emperor Augustus, and chief of the Palatine Library.

The poem is modelled, as Ovid himself states, on a poem of the same name which Callimachus wrote against a poet who had been his pupil, and afterwards became a rival—Apollonius Rhodius.

The "Ibis" has the look of being a literary *tour de force*. Callimachus was a favourite model with Roman authors, and Ovid probably amused some of the vacant hours of his exile with paraphrasing his poem. Every story of Greek mythology, legend, and history is ransacked to furnish the curses

which are heaped on the head of the luckless man. "May he fall over a staircase, as did Elpenor, the companion of Ulysses! May he be torn to pieces by a lioness, as was Phayllus, tyrant of Ambracia! May he be killed by a bee-sting in the eye, as was the poet Achæus! May he be devoured, as Glaucus was devoured, by his horses; or leap, as did another Glaucus, into the sea! May he drink, with trembling mouth, the same draught that Socrates drank, all undisturbed! May he perish caught by the hands, as was Milo in the oak which he tried to rend!" These are a few, but, it will probably be thought, sufficient, examples of the "Ibis."

Fragments and Lost Poems

In his "Art of Love," Ovid tells his readers that he had written a book on "Cosmetics," which was small in size, but had cost him much pains. Of this book we have remaining a fragment of about a hundred lines. His instructions are eminently practical in character,—giving the ingredients, the proper weight, and the right manner of mixing them. His first recipe is for brightening the complexion. Take two pounds of barley, as much of bitter lupine, and ten eggs; dry and then grind the substance. Add a sixth of a pound of stag's-horns; they must be those shed by the animal for the first time. The mixture is to be passed through a sieve. Twelve narcissus-roots with the rind stripped off are to be pounded in a marble mortar; add the sixth of a pound of gum, and as much spelt, with a pound and a half of honey. "Dress your face," says the poet, "with this, and you will have a complexion brighter than your mirror itself." What other secrets of beauty Ovid may have unfolded cannot be known, for here the fragment breaks off.

About a hundred and thirty lines of a poem on "Fishing" have also survived; but they are in a very broken condition, and a passage descriptive of land animals has somehow found its way into the midst of them.

A poem called the "Walnut," in which the tree complains, among other things, of its hard lot in being pelted with stones by passers-by, has been attributed to Ovid. Some critics

have supposed it to be a juvenile production, but the weight of authority is against its authenticity.

In the tragedy of "Medea" the world has suffered a serious loss. Quintilian, a severe critic, says of it that it seemed to him to prove how much its author could have achieved, if he had chosen to moderate rather than to indulge his cleverness. He mentions in the same context the "Thyestes" of Varius, which might challenge comparison, he says, with any of the Greek tragedies. The two dramas are also coupled together by Tacitus in his "Dialogue about Famous Orators," where he compares the popularity of dramatic and oratorical works, just as we might couple together "Hamlet" and "King Lear." The "Medea" has been altogether lost, but we may gather some idea of the manner in which the poet treated his subject from the seventh book of the "Metamorphoses," the first half of which is devoted to the legend of the great Colchian sorceress. What portion of it was chosen for the subject of the drama we do not know; but it may be conjectured that while the "Medea" of Euripides depicted the last scenes of her career, when she avenged the infidelity of Jason by the murder of her children, Ovid represents her at an earlier time, when, as the daughter of King Æëtes, she loved and helped the gallant leader of the Argonauts.

Death of Ovid

The last lines written by Ovid are probably some which we find in the "Fasti" under the first of June, praising Tiberius for the pious work which he had accomplished in rebuilding and dedicating various temples at Rome. These temples were dedicated, as we learn from Tacitus, in A.D. 17. The poet died, St. Jerome tells us, in the same year, some time before September, from which month, in Jerome's chronicle, the years are reckoned. It had been his earnest wish that the sentence which had been so rigorously executed against him during his life might at least be relaxed after his death, and that his bones might be permitted to rest in his native Italy. The desire was not granted: he was buried at Tomi. A pretended discovery of his tomb was made early

in the sixteenth century at Stainz, in Austria,—a place far too remote from Tomi to make the story at all probable. If his body could have been transported so far, why not to Italy? The story appeared in another edition; the tomb and its epitaph were the same, as was also the year of the discovery, but the place was now Sawar, in Lower Hungary. It may probably be put down as one of the impostures, more or less ingenious, with which scholars have often amused themselves, and of which the period following the revival of learning—a period during which genuine discoveries of classical remains were frequently made—was particularly fertile. As recently as the beginning of this century, it was announced in some of the Parisian papers that the Russian troops, while engaged in building a fortress on the banks of the Danube, had opened the poet's sepulchre, and had named the place *Ovidopol,* in his honour. Unfortunately it turned out that the fortress had never been built, or even commenced; and that the local name of *Lagone Ovidouloni* (which, to give a colour to the story, had been changed into *Lacus Ovidoli*) owed its origin, not to any remembrance of Ovid, but to the practice of washing there the sheep (Lat. *ovis*) which were exported in large numbers from Moldavia for the consumption of Constantinople. We may dismiss as equally apocryphal the story of the silver writing-style of the poet, which was shown in 1540 to Isabella, Queen of Hungary, as having been recently discovered at Belgrade, the ancient *Taurunum.*

General Observations

Quintilian says that Ovid was too much in love with his own cleverness, but that he was in some respects worthy of commendation. Lord Macaulay confirms, or perhaps amplifies, this judgment, when he says that Ovid "had two insupportable faults: the one is, that he will always be clever; the other, that he never knows when to have done." Of the "Metamorphoses" the same great critic wrote: "There are some very fine things in this poem; and in ingenuity, and the art of doing difficult things in expression and versification as if they were the easiest in the world, Ovid is quite incom-

parable." He thought that the best parts of the work were the second book, and the first half of the thirteenth book, where, in the oratorical contest between Ajax and Ulysses for the arms of Achilles, his own tastes were doubtless satisfied. The severest criticism which he passes upon the poet is when he pronounces the "Art of Love" to be his best poem.

If popularity is a test of merit, Ovid must be placed very high among the writers of antiquity. No classical poet has been so widely and so continuously read. He seems not to have been forgotten even when learning and the taste for literature were at their lowest ebb. Among the stories which attest the favour in which he was held may be quoted the words which are reported to have been used by Alphonso, surnamed the Magnanimous. That eccentric prince, who may be called the Pyrrhus of modern history, while prosecuting his conquests in Italy, came to the town of Sulmo, which has been mentioned as Ovid's birthplace. "Willingly would I yield this region, which is no small or contemptible part of the kingdom of Naples, could it have been granted to my times to possess this poet. Even dead I hold him to be of more account than the possession of the whole of Apulia."

The bibliography of Ovid, as a writer in the "Nouvelle Biographie Universelle" remarks, is immense. Two folio volumes of the "New Catalogue of the British Museum" are devoted to an enumeration of editions and translations of the whole or various parts of his works.

It was not altogether a bad character which has been thus summed up by Lord Macaulay: "He seems to have been a very good fellow; rather too fond of women; a flatterer and a coward: but kind and generous; and free from envy, though a man of letters, and though sufficiently vain of his own performances."

THE METAMORPHOSES

BOOK THE FIRST

THE ARGUMENT

My design leads me to speak of forms changed into new bodies. Ye Gods (for you it was who changed them), favour my attempts, and bring down the lengthened narrative from the very beginning of the world, even to my own times.

FABLE I

God reduces Chaos into order. He separates the four elements, and disposes the several bodies, of which the universe is formed, into their proper situations.

At first, the sea, the earth, and the heaven, which covers all things, were the only face of nature throughout the whole universe, which men have named Chaos; a rude and undigested mass, and nothing more than an inert weight, and the discordant atoms of things not harmonizing, heaped together in the same spot. No Sun as yet gave light to the world; nor did the Moon, by increasing, recover her horns anew. The Earth did not as yet hang in the surrounding air, balanced by its own weight, nor had Amphitrite [1] stretched out her arms along the lengthened margin of the coasts. Wherever, too, was the land, there also was the sea and the air; and thus was the earth without firmness, the sea unnavigable, the air void of light; in no one of them did its present form exist. And one was ever obstructing the other; because in the same body the cold was striving with the hot, the moist with the dry,

[1] She was the daughter of Oceanus and Doris, and the wife of Neptune, God of the Sea. Being the Goddess of the Ocean, her name is here used to signify the ocean itself.

the soft with the hard, things having weight with those devoid of weight.

To this discord God and bounteous Nature put an end; for he separated the earth from the heavens, and the waters from the earth, and distinguished the clear heavens from the gross atmosphere. And after he had unravelled these elements, and released them from that confused heap, he combined them, thus disjoined, in harmonious unison, each in its proper place. The element of the vaulted heaven,[1] fiery and without weight, shone forth, and selected a place for itself in the highest region: next after it, both in lightness and in place, was the air; the Earth was more weighty than these, and drew with it the more ponderous atoms, and was pressed together by its own gravity. The encircling waters sank to the lowermost place, and surrounded the solid globe.

FABLE II

After the separation of matter, God gives form and regularity to the universe; and all other living creatures being produced, Prometheus moulds earth tempered with water, into a human form, which is animated by Minerva.

When thus he, whoever of the Gods he was, had divided the mass so separated, and reduced it, so divided, into distinct members; in the first place, that it might not be unequal on any side, he gathered it up into the form of a vast globe; then he commanded the sea to be poured around it, and to grow boisterous with the raging winds, and to surround the shores of the Earth, encompassed by it; he added also springs, and numerous pools and lakes, and he bounded the rivers as they flowed downwards, with slanting banks. These, different in different places, are some of them swallowed up by the

[1] This is a periphrasis, signifying the *empyrean,* or region of the firmament or upper air, in which the sun and stars move; which was supposed to be of the purest fire and the source of all flame. The heavens are called "convex," from being supposed to assume the same shape as the terrestrial globe which they surround.

Earth itself; some of them reach the ocean, and, received in the expanse of waters that take a freer range, beat against shores instead of banks.

He commanded the plains, too, to be extended, the valleys to sink down, the woods to be clothed with green leaves, the craggy mountains to arise; and, as on the right-hand side, two Zones intersect the heavens, and as many on the left; and as there is a fifth hotter than these,[1] so did the care of the Deity distinguish this enclosed mass of the Earth by the same number, and as many climates are marked out upon the Earth. Of these, that which is the middle one is not habitable on account of the heat; deep snow covers two of them. Between either these he placed as many more, and gave them a temperate climate, heat being mingled with cold.

Over these hangs the air, which is heavier than fire, in the same degree that the weight of water is lighter than the weight of the Earth. Here he ordered vapours, here too, the clouds to take their station; the thunder, too, to terrify the minds of mortals, and with the lightnings, the winds that bring on cold. The Contriver of the World did not allow these indiscriminately to take possession of the sky. Even now, (although they each of them govern their own blasts in a distinct tract) they are with great difficulty prevented from rending the world asunder, so great is the discord of the brothers.[2] Eurus took his way towards the rising of Aurora and the realms of Nabath [Arabia] and Persia, and the mountain ridges exposed to the rays of the morning. The Evening star, and the shores which are warm with the setting sun, are bordering upon Zephyrus. The terrible Boreas invaded Scythia, and the regions of the North. The opposite quarter is wet with continual clouds, and the driz-

[1] The "right hand" here refers to the northern part of the globe, and the "left hand" to the southern. He here speaks of the five zones into which astronomers have divided the heavens: the tropical zone, the northern and southern equinoctial zones, and the northern and southern polar zones. These severally correspond to the torrid, temperate, and frigid zones on the earth.

[2] That is, the winds, who, according to the Theogony of Hesiod, were the sons of Astreus, the giant, and Aurora.

zling South Wind. Over these he placed the firmament, clear and devoid of gravity, and not containing anything of the dregs of earth.

Scarcely had he separated all these by fixed limits, when the stars, which had long lain hid, concealed beneath that mass of Chaos, began to glow through the range of the heavens. And that no region might be destitute of its own peculiar animated beings, the stars [1] and the forms of the Gods [1] possess the tract of heaven; the waters fell to be inhabited by the smooth fishes; the Earth received the wild beasts, and the yielding air the birds.

But an animated being, more holy than these, more fitted to receive higher faculties, and which could rule over the rest, was still wanting. Then Man was formed. Whether it was that the Artificer of all things, the original of the world in its improved state, framed him from divine elements; or whether, the Earth, being newly made, and but lately divided from the lofty æther, still retained some atoms of its kindred heaven, which, tempered with the waters of the stream, the son of Iapetus fashioned after the image of the Gods, who rule over all things. And, whereas other animals bend their looks downwards upon the Earth, to Man he gave a countenance to look on high and to behold the heavens, and to raise his face erect to the stars. Thus, that which had been lately rude earth, and without any regular shape, being changed, assumed the form of Man, till then unknown.

FABLE III

The formation of man is followed by a succession of the four ages of the world. The first is the Golden Age, during which Innocence and Justice alone govern the world.

The Golden Age was first founded, which, without any avenger, of its own accord, without laws, practised both faith and rectitude. Punishment, and the fear of it, did not exist, and threatening decrees were not read upon the brazen tables,

[1] According to the Platonic philosophers, stars were either intelligent beings, or guided and actuated by such.

fixed up to view, nor yet did the suppliant multitude dread the countenance of its judge; but all were in safety without any avenger. The pine-tree, cut from its native mountains, had not yet descended to the flowing waves, that it might visit a foreign region; and mortals were acquainted with no shores beyond their own. Not as yet did deep ditches surround the towns; no trumpets of straightened, or clarions of crooked brass, no helmets, no swords then existed. Without occasion for soldiers, the minds of men, free from care, enjoyed an easy tranquillity.

The Earth itself, too, in freedom, untouched by the harrow, and wounded by no ploughshares, of its own accord produced everything; and men, contented with the food created under no compulsion, gathered the fruit of the arbute-tree, and the strawberries of the mountain, and cornels, and blackberries adhering to the prickly bramble-bushes, and acorns which had fallen from the wide-spreading tree of Jove. Then it was an eternal spring; and the gentle Zephyrs, with their soothing breezes, cherished the flowers produced without any seed. Soon, too, the Earth unploughed yielded crops of grain, and the land, without being renewed, was whitened with the heavy ears of corn. Then, rivers of milk, then, rivers of nectar were flowing, and the yellow honey was distilled from the green holm oak.

FABLE IV

In the Silver Age, men begin not to be so just, nor, consequently, so happy, as in the Golden Age. In the Brazen Age, which succeeds, they become yet less virtuous; but their wickedness does not rise to its highest pitch until the Iron Age, when it makes its appearance in all its deformity.

Afterwards (Saturn being driven into the shady realms of Tartarus), the world was under the sway of Jupiter; then the Silver Age succeeded, inferior to that of gold, but more precious than that of yellow brass. Jupiter shortened the duration of the former spring, and divided the year into four periods by means of winters, and summers, and unsteady autumns, and short springs. Then, for the first time, did the parched air glow with sultry heat, and the ice, bound up by the

winds, was pendant. Then, for the first time, did men enter houses; those houses were caverns, and thick shrubs, and twigs fastened together with bark. Then, for the first time, were the seeds of Ceres buried in long furrows, and the oxen groaned, pressed by the yoke of the ploughshare.

The Age of Brass succeeded, as the third in order, after these; fiercer in disposition, and more prone to horrible warfare, but yet free from impiety. The last Age was of hard iron. Immediately every species of crime burst forth, in this age of degenerated tendencies; modesty, truth, and honour took flight; in their place succeeded fraud, deceit, treachery, violence, and the cursed hankering for acquisition. The sailor now spread his sails to the winds, and with these, as yet, he was but little acquainted; and the trees, which had long stood on the lofty mountains, now, as ships, bounded through the unknown waves. The ground, too, hitherto common as the light of the sun and the breezes, the cautious measurer marked out with his lengthened boundary.

And not only was the rich soil required to furnish corn and due sustenance, but men even descended into the entrails of the Earth; and riches were dug up, the incentives to vice, which the Earth had hidden, and had removed to the Stygian shades. Then destructive iron came forth, and gold, more destructive than iron; then War came forth, the fights through the means of both, and that brandishes in his blood-stained hands the clattering arms. Men live by rapine; the guest is not safe from his entertainer, nor the father-in-law from the son-in-law; good feeling, too, between brothers is a rarity. The husband is eager for the death of the wife, she for that of her husband. Horrible step-mothers then mingle the ghastly wolfsbane; the son prematurely makes inquiry of astrologers into the years of his father. Piety lies vanquished, and the virgin Astræa [1] is the last of the heavenly Deities to abandon the Earth, now drenched in slaughter.

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[1] The daughter of Astræus and Aurora, or of Jupiter and Themis, and was the Goddess of Justice. On leaving the earth, she was supposed to have taken her place among the stars as the Constellation of the Virgin.

FABLE V

The Giants having attempted to render themselves masters of heaven, Jupiter buries them under the mountains which they have heaped together to facilitate their assault; and the Earth, animating their blood, forms out of it a crude and fierce generation of men.

And that the lofty realms of æther might not be more safe than the Earth, they say that the Giants aspired to the sovereignty of Heaven, and piled the mountains, heaped together, even to the lofty stars. Then the omnipotent Father, hurling his lightnings, broke through Olympus, and struck Ossa away from Pelion, that lay beneath it.[1] While the dreadful carcasses lay overwhelmed beneath their own structure, they say that the Earth was wet, drenched with the plenteous blood of her sons, and that she gave life to the warm gore; and that, lest no memorial of this ruthless race should be surviving, she shaped them into the form of men. But that generation, too, was a despiser of the Gods above, and most greedy of ruthless slaughter, and full of violence: you might see that they derived their origin from blood.

FABLE VI

Jupiter, having seen the crimes of this impious race of men, calls a council of the Gods, and determines to destroy the world.

When the Father of the Gods, the son of Saturn, beheld this from his loftiest height, he groaned aloud; and recalling to memory the polluted banquet on the table of Lycaon, not yet publicly known, from the crime being but lately committed, he conceives in his mind vast wrath, and such as is

[1] Olympus was a mountain between Thessaly and Macedonia. Pelion was a mountain of Thessaly, towards the Pelasgic gulf; and Ossa was a mountain between Olympus and Pelion. These the Giants are said to have heaped one on another, in order to scale heaven.

worthy of Jove, and calls together a council; no delay detains them, thus summoned.

There is a way on high, easily seen in a clear sky, and which, remarkable for its very whiteness, receives the name of the Milky Way. Along this is the way for the Gods above to the abode of the great Thunderer and his royal palace. On the right and on the left side the courts of the ennobled Deities[1] are thronged, with open gates. The Gods of lower rank inhabit various places; in front of the Way, the powerful and illustrious inhabitants of Heaven have established their residence. This is the place which, if boldness may be allowed to my expressions, I should not hesitate to style the palatial residence of Heaven. When, therefore, the Gods above had taken their seats in the marble hall of assembly; he himself, elevated on his seat, and leaning on his sceptre of ivory, three or four times shook the awful locks of his head, with which he makes the Earth, the Seas, and the Stars to tremble. Then, after such manner as this, did he open his indignant lips;—

"Not even at that time was I more concerned for the empire of the universe, when each of the snake-footed monsters was endeavouring to lay his hundred arms on the captured skies. For although that was a dangerous enemy, yet that war was with but one stock, and sprang from a single origin. Now must the race of mortals be cut off by me, wherever Nereus[2] roars on all sides of the earth; this I swear by the Rivers of Hell, that glide in the Stygian grove beneath the earth. All methods have been already tried; but a wound that admits of no cure, must be cut away with the knife, that the sound parts may not be corrupted. I have as subjects, Demigods, and I have the rustic Deities, the Nymphs, and the Fauns, and the Satyrs, and the Sylvans, the inhabitants of the mountains; these, though as yet, we have not

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[1] These were the superior Deities, who formed the privy councillors of Jupiter. Reckoning Jupiter, they were twelve in number, and are enumerated by Ennius in two limping hexameter lines:—

"Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars,
Mercurius, Jovis, Neptunis, Vulcanus, Apollo."

[2] The son of Oceanus and Tethys, here representing the ocean.

thought them worthy of the honour of Heaven, let us, at least, permit to inhabit the earth which we have granted them. And do you, ye Gods of Heaven, believe that they will be in proper safety, when Lycaon, remarkable for his cruelty, has formed a plot against even me, who own and hold sway over the thunder and yourselves?"

All shouted their ascent aloud, and with ardent zeal they called for vengeance on one who dared such crimes. Thus, when an impious band [1] madly raged to extinguish the Roman name in the blood of Cæsar, the human race was astonished with sudden terror at ruin so universal, and the whole earth shook with horror. Nor was the affectionate regard, Augustus, of thy subjects less grateful to thee, than that was to Jupiter. Who, after he had, by means of his voice and his hand, suppressed their murmurs, all of them kept silence. Soon as the clamour had ceased, checked by the authority of their ruler, Jupiter again broke silence in these words:

"He, indeed, (dismiss your cares) has suffered dire punishment; but what was the offence and what the retribution, I will inform you. The report of the iniquity of the age had reached my ears; wishing to find this not to be the truth, I descended from the top of Olympus, and, a God in a human shape, I surveyed the earth. 'Twere an endless task to enumerate how great an amount of guilt was everywhere discovered; the report itself was below the truth."

FABLE VII

Lycaon, king of Arcadia, in order to discover if it is Jupiter himself who has come to lodge in his palace, orders the body of an hostage, who had been sent to him, to be dressed and served up at a feast. The God, as a punishment, changes him into a wolf.

I HAD now passed Mænalus, to be dreaded for its dens of beasts of prey, and the pine-groves of cold Lycæus,[2] together

[1] Ovid here refers to the conspiracy against Augustus, which is mentioned by Suetonius.

[2] A mountain of Arcadia, sacred to Pan.

with Cyllene.[1] After this, I entered the realms and the inhospitable abode of the Arcadian tyrant, just as the late twilight was bringing on the night. I gave a signal that a God had come, and the people commenced to pay their adorations. In the first place, Lycaon derided their pious supplications. Afterwards, he said, I will make trial, by a plain proof, whether this is a God, or whether he is a mortal; nor shall the truth remain a matter of doubt. He then makes preparations to destroy me, when sunk in sleep, by an unexpected death; this mode of testing the truth pleases him. And not content with that, with the sword he cuts the throat of an hostage that had been sent from the nation of the Molossians,[2] and then softens part of the quivering limbs in boiling water, and part he roasts with fire placed beneath. Soon as he had placed these on the table, I, with avenging flames, overthrew the house upon the household Gods,[3] worthy of the master. Alarmed, he himself takes to flight, and having reached the solitude of the country, he howls aloud, and in vain attempts to speak; his mouth gathers rage from himself, and through its usual desire for slaughter, it is directed against the sheep, and even still delights in blood. His garments are changed into hair, his arms into legs; he becomes a wolf, and he still retains vestiges of his ancient form. His hoariness is still the same, the same violence appears in his features; his eyes are bright as before; he is still the same image of ferocity.

"Thus fell one house; but one house alone did not deserve to perish; wherever the earth extends, the savage Erinnys[4] reigns. You would suppose that men had conspired to be

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[1] A mountain of Arcadia, sacred to Mercury, who was hence called by the poets Cyllenius.

[2] The Molossi were a people of Epirus, on the eastern side of the Ambracian gulf. Ovid here commits an anachronism, as the name was derived from Molossus, the son of Neoptolemus, long after the time of Lycaon.

[3] *i. e.*, for taking such a miscreant under their protection.

[4] Erinnys was a general name given to the Furies by the Greeks. They were three in number—Alecto, Tisiphon, and Megæra. These were so called from the Greek *eris nou,* "the discord of the mind," because they punished wrong-doers with remorse and insanity.

wicked; let all men speedily feel that vengeance which they deserve to endure, for such is my determination."

FABLE VIII

Jupiter, not thinking the punishment of Lycaon sufficient to strike terror into the rest of mankind, resolves, on account of the universal corruption, to extirpate them by a universal deluge.

Some, by their words approve the speech of Jupiter, and give spur to him, indignantly exclaiming; others, by silent assent fulfil their parts. Yet the entire destruction of the human race is a cause of grief to them all, and they enquire what is to be the form of the earth in future, when destitute of mankind? who is to place frankincense[1] on the altars? and whether it is his design to give up the nations for a prey to the wild beasts? The ruler of the Gods forbids them making these enquiries, to be alarmed (for that the rest should be his care); and he promises, that from a wondrous source he will raise a generation unlike the preceding race.

And now he was about to scatter his thunder over all lands; but he was afraid lest, perchance, the sacred æther might catch fire, from so many flames, and the extended sky might become enflamed. He remembers, too, that it was in the decrees of Fate, that a time should come,[2] at which the sea, the earth, and the palace of heaven, seized by the flames, should be burned, and the laboriously-wrought fabric of the universe should be in danger of perishing. The weapons forged by the hands of the Cyclops are laid aside; a different mode of punishment pleases him: to destroy mankind beneath the waves, and to let loose the rains from the whole tract of Heaven. At once he shuts the North Wind in the caverns of Æolus, and all those blasts which dispel the clouds drawn over

[1] An anachronism. In those early ages, corn, or wheaten flour, was the customary offering to the Deities, and not frankincense, which was introduced among the luxuries of more refined times.

[2] The Sibyls predicted that the world should perish by fire.

the Earth: and then he sends forth the South Wind. With soaking wings the South Wind flies abroad, having his terrible face covered with pitchy darkness; his beard is loaded with showers, the water streams down from his hoary locks, clouds gather upon his forehead, his wings and the folds of his robe drip with wet; and, as with his broad hand he squeezes the hanging clouds, a crash arises, and thence showers are poured in torrents from the sky. Iris,[1] the messenger of Juno, clothed in various colours, collects the waters, and bears a supply upwards to the clouds.

The standing corn is beaten down, and the expectations of the husbandman, now lamented by him, are ruined, and the labours of a long year prematurely perish. Nor is the wrath of Jove satisfied with his own heaven; but Neptune, his azure brother, aids him with his auxiliary waves. He calls together the rivers, which, soon as they had entered the abode of their ruler, he says, "I must not now employ a lengthened exhortation; pour forth all your might, so the occasion requires. Open your abodes, and, each obstacle removed, give full rein to your streams." Thus he commanded; they return, and open the mouths of their fountains, and roll on into the ocean with unobstructed course. He himself struck the Earth with his trident, on which it shook, and with a tremor laid open the sources of its waters. The rivers, breaking out, rush through the open plains, and bear away, together with the standing corn, the groves, flocks, men, houses, and temples, together with their sacred utensils. If any house remained, and, not thrown down, was able to resist ruin so vast, yet the waves, rising aloft, covered the roof of that house, and the towers tottered, overwhelmed beneath the stream. And now sea and land had no mark of distinction; everything now was ocean; and to that ocean shores were wanting. One man takes possession of a hill, another sits in a curved boat, and plies the oars there where he had lately ploughed; another sails over the standing corn, or the roof of his country-house under water; another catches a fish on the top of an elm-tree. An anchor (if chance so directs) is fastened in a green mea-

[1] Goddess of the rainbow.

dow, or the curving keels come in contact with the vineyards, now below them; and where of late the slender goats had cropped the grass, there unsightly sea-calves are now reposing their bodies.

The Nereids wonder at the groves, the cities, and the houses under water; dolphins get into the woods, and run against the lofty branches, and beat against the tossed oaks. The wolf swims among the sheep; the wave carries along the tawny lions; the wave carries along the tigers. Neither does the powers of his lightning-shock avail the wild boar, nor his swift legs the stag, now borne away. The wandering bird, too, having long sought for land, where it may be allowed to light, its wings failing, falls down into the sea. The boundless range of the sea had overwhelmed the hills, and the stranger waves beat against the heights of the mountains. The greatest part is carried off by the water: those whom the water spares, long fastings overcome, through scantiness of food.

FABLE IX

Neptune appeases the angry waves; and he commands Triton to sound his shell, that the sea may retire within its shores, and the rivers within their banks. Deucalion and Pyrrha are the only persons saved from the deluge.

Phocis separates the Aonian from the Actæan region;[1] a fruitful land while it was a land; but at that time it had become a part of the sea, and a wide plain of sudden waters. There a lofty mountain rises towards the stars, with two tops, by name Parnassus,[2] and advances beyond the clouds with its summit. When here Deucalion (for the sea had covered all other places), borne in a little ship, with the partner of his

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[1] Aonia was a mountainous region of Bœotia; and Actæa was an ancient name of Attica, from *akte,* the sea-shore.

[2] Mount Parnassus has two peaks, of which the one was called "Tichoreum," and was sacred to Bacchus; and the other "Hypampeum," and was devoted to Apollo and the Muses.

couch, first rested; they adored the Corycian Nymphs,[1] and the Deities of the mountain, and the prophetic Themis,[2] who at that time used to give out oracular responses. No man was there more upright than he, nor a greater lover of justice, nor was any woman more regardful of the Deities than she.

Soon as Jupiter beholds the world overflowed by liquid waters, and sees that but one man remains out of so many thousands of late, and sees that but one woman remains out of so many thousands of late, both guiltless, and both worshippers of the Gods, he disperses the clouds; and the showers being removed by the North Wind, he both lays open the earth to the heavens, and the heavens to the earth. The rage, too, of the sea does not continue; and his three-forked trident now laid aside, the ruler of the deep assuages the waters, and calls upon the azure Triton standing above the deep, and having his shoulders covered with the native purple shells; and he bids him blow his resounding trumpet, and, the signal being given, to call back the waves and the streams. The hollow-wreathed trumpet[3] is taken up by him, which grows to a great width from its lowest twist; the trumpet, which, soon as it receives the air in the middle of the sea, fills with its notes the shores lying under either sun. Then, too, as soon as it touched the lips of the God dripping with his wet beard, and being blown, sounded the bidden retreat; it was heard by all the waters both of earth and sea, and stopped all those waters by which it was heard. Now the sea again has a shore; their channels receive the full rivers; the rivers subside; the hills are seen to come forth. The ground rises, places increase in extent as the waters decrease; and after a length of time, the woods show their naked tops, and retain the mud left upon their branches.

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[1] So called from inhabiting the Corycian cavern in Mount Parnassus; they were fabled to be the daughters of Plistus, a river near Delphi.

[2] Themis is said to have preceded Apollo in giving oracular responses at Delphi. She was the daughter of Cœlus and Terra, and was the first to instruct men to ask of the Gods "that which was lawful and right," whence her name, which has this significance.

[3] The conch shell.

The world was restored: which when Deucalion beheld to be empty, and how the desolate Earth kept a profound silence, he thus addressed Pyrrha, with tears bursting forth:—"O sister, O wife, O thou, the only woman surviving, whom a common origin,[1] and a kindred descent, and afterwards the marriage tie has united to me, and whom now dangers themselves unite to me; we two are the whole people of the earth, whatever both the East and the West behold; of all the rest, the sea has taken possession. And even now there is no certain assurance of our lives; even yet do the clouds terrify my mind. What would now have been thy feelings, if without me thou hadst been rescued from destruction, O thou deserving of compassion? In what manner couldst thou have been able alone to support this terror? With whom for a consoler, to endure these sorrows? For I, believe me, my wife, if the sea had only carried thee off, should have followed thee, and the sea should have carried me off as well. Oh that I could replace the people that are lost by the arts of my father,[2] and infuse the soul into the moulded earth! Now the mortal race exists in us two alone. Thus it has seemed good to the Gods, and we remain as mere samples of mankind."

FABLE X

Deucalion and Pyrrha re-people the earth by casting stones behind them, in the manner prescribed by the Goddess Themis, whose oracle they had consulted.

He thus spoke, and they wept. They resolved to pray to the Deities of Heaven, and to seek relief through the sacred oracles. There is no delay; together they repair to the waters

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[1] Prometheus was the father of Deucalion and Epimetheus of Pyrrha; Prometheus and Epimetheus being the sons of Iapetus. It is in an extended sense that he styles her "sister"; she being really his cousin.

[2] He alludes to the story of his father, Prometheus, having formed men of clay, and animated them with fire stolen from heaven.

of Cephisus,[1] though not yet clear, yet now cutting their wonted channel. Then, when they have sprinkled the waters poured on their clothes[2] and their heads, they turn their steps to the temple of the sacred Goddess, the roof of which was defiled with foul moss, and whose altars were standing without fires. Soon as they reached the steps of the temple, each of them fell prostrate on the ground, and, trembling, gave kisses to the cold pavement. And thus they said:

"If the Deities, prevailed upon by just prayers, are to be mollified, if the wrath of the Gods is to be averted; tell us, O Themis, by what art the loss of our race is to be repaired, and give thy assistance, O most gentle Goddess, to our ruined fortunes." The Goddess was moved, and gave this response: "Depart from my temple, and cover your heads, and loosen the garments girt around you, and throw behind your backs the bones of your great mother." For a long time they are amazed; and Pyrrha is the first by her words to break the silence, and then refuses to obey the commands of the Goddess; and begs her, with trembling lips, to grant her pardon, and dreads to offend the shades of her mother by casting her bones. In the meantime they reconsider the words of the response given, but involved in dark obscurity, and they ponder them among themselves. Upon that, the son of Prometheus soothes the daughter of Epimetheus with these gentle words, and says, "Either is my discernment fallacious, or the oracles are just, and advise no sacrilege. The earth is the great mother; I suspect that the stones in the body of the earth are the bones meant; these we are ordered to throw behind our backs." Although she, descended from Titan, is moved by this interpretation of her husband, still her hope is involved in doubt; so much do they both distrust the advice of heaven; but what harm will it do to try?

They go down, and they veil their heads, and ungird their garments, and cast stones, as ordered, behind their footsteps.

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[1] The river Cephisus rises on Mount Parnassus, and flows near Delphi.

[2] It was the custom of the ancients, before entering a temple, either to sprinkle themselves with water, or to wash the body all over.

The stones (who could have believed it, but that antiquity is a witness of the thing?) began to lay aside their hardness and their stiffness, and by degrees to become soft; and when softened, to assume a new form. Presently after, when they were grown larger, a milder nature, too, was conferred on them, so that some shape of man might be seen in them, yet though but imperfect; and as if from the marble commenced to be wrought, not sufficiently distinct, and very like to rough statues. Yet that part of them which was humid with any moisture, and earthy, was turned into portions adapted for the use of the body. That which is solid, and cannot be bent, is changed into bones; that which was just now a vein, still remains under the same name. And in a little time, by the interposition of the Gods above, the stones thrown by the hands of the man, took the shape of a man, and the female race was renewed by the throwing of the woman. Thence are we a hardy generation, and able to endure fatigue, and we give proofs from what original we are sprung.

FABLE XI

The Earth, being warmed by the heat of the sun, produces many monsters; among others, the serpent Python, which Apollo kills with his arrows. To establish a memorial of this event, he institutes the Pythian games, and adopts the surname of Pythius.

The Earth of her own accord brought forth other animals of different forms; after that the former moisture was thoroughly heated by the rays of the sun, and the mud and the wet fens fermented with the heat; and the fruitful seeds of things nourished by the enlivening soil, as in the womb of a mother, grew, and, in lapse of time, assumed some regular shape. Thus, when the seven-streamed Nile[1] has forsaken the oozy fields, and has returned its waters to their ancient channel, and the fresh mud has been heated with the æthereal

[1] The river Nile discharges itself into the sea by seven mouths.

sun, the labourers, on turning up the clods, meet with very many animals, and among them, some just begun at the very moment of their formation, and some they see still imperfect, and as yet destitute of some of their limbs; and often, in the same body, as one part animated, the other part is coarse earth. For when moisture and heat have been subjected to a due mixture, they conceive; and all things arise from these two.

And although fire is the antagonist of heat, yet a moist vapour creates all things, and this discordant concord is suited for generation; when, therefore, the Earth, covered with mud by the late deluge, was thoroughly heated by the æthereal sunshine and a penetrating warmth, it produced species of creatures innumerable; and partly restored the former shapes, and partly gave birth to new monsters. She, indeed, might have been unwilling, but then she produced thee as well, thou enormous Python; and thou, unheard of serpent, wast a source of terror to this new race of men, so vast a part of a mountain didst thou occupy.

The God that bears the bow, and that had never before used such arms, but against the deer and the timorous goats, destroyed him, overwhelmed with a thousand arrows, his quiver being well-nigh exhausted, as the venom oozed forth through the black wounds; and that length of time might not efface the fame of the deed, he instituted sacred games,[1] with contests famed in story, called "Pythia," from the name of the serpent so conquered. In these, whosoever of the young men conquered in boxing, in running, or in chariot-racing, received the honour of a crown of beechen leaves. As yet the laurel

[1] Yet Pausanias tells us that they were instituted by Diomedes; others, again, say by Eurylochus the Thessalian; and others, by Amphictyon, or Adrastus. The Pythian games were celebrated near Delphi, on the Crissæan plain, which contained a race-course, a stadium of 1000 feet in length, and a theatre, in which the musical contests took place. Previously to the 48th Olympiad, the Pythian games had been celebrated at the end of every eighth year; after that period, they were held at the end of every fourth year. When they ceased to be solemnized is unknown; but in the time of the Emperor Julian they still continued to be held.

existed not, and Phœbus used to bind his temples, graceful with long hair, with garlands from any tree.

FABLE XII

Apollo, falling in love with Daphne, the daughter of the river Peneus, she flies from him. He pursues her; on which, the Nymph, imploring the aid of her father, is changed into a laurel.

DAPHNE, the daughter of Peneus,[1] was the first love of Phœbus; whom, not blind chance, but the vengeful anger of Cupid assigned to him.

The Delian God,[2] proud of having lately subdued the serpent, had seen him bending the bow and drawing the string, and had said, "What hast thou to do, wanton boy, with gallant arms? Such a burden as that better befits my shoulders; I, who am able to give unerring wounds to the wild beasts, wounds to the enemy; who lately slew with arrows innumerable the swelling Python, that covered so many acres of land with his pestilential belly. Do thou be contented to excite I know not what flames with thy torch; and do not lay claim to praises properly my own."

To him the son of Venus replies, "Let thy bow shoot all things, Phœbus; my bow shall shoot thee; and as much as all animals fall short of thee, so much is thy glory less than mine." He thus said; and cleaving the air with his beating wings, with activity he stood upon the shady heights of Parnassus, and drew two weapons out of his arrow-bearing quiver, of different workmanship; the one repels, the other excites desire. That which causes love is of gold, and is brilliant, with a sharp point; that which repels it is blunt, and contains lead beneath the reed. This one the God fixed in the Nymph, the daughter of Peneus, but with the other he wounded the

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[1] The Peneus was a river of Thessaly.

[2] Apollo is so called, from having been born in the Isle of Delos, in the Ægean Sea.

very marrow of Apollo, through his bones pierced by the arrow. Immediately the one is in love; the other flies from the very name of a lover, rejoicing in the recesses of the woods, and in the spoils of wild beasts taken in hunting, and becomes a rival of the virgin Phœbe. A fillet tied together[1] her hair, put up without any order. Many a one courted her; she hated all wooers; not able to endure, and quite unacquainted with man, she traverses the solitary parts of the woods, and she cares not what Hymen, what love, or what marriage means. Many a time did her father say, "My daughter, thou owest me a son-in-law;" many a time did her father say, "My daughter, thou owest me grandchildren." She, utterly abhorring the nuptial torch, as though a crime, has her beateous face covered with the blush of modesty; and clinging to her father's neck, with caressing arms, she says, "Allow me, my dearest father, to enjoy perpetual virginity; her father, in times bygone, granted this to Diana."

He indeed complied. But that very beauty forbids thee to be what thou wishest, and the charms of thy person are an impediment to thy desires. Phœbus falls in love, and he covets an alliance with Daphne, now seen by him, and what he covets he hopes for, and his own oracles deceive him; and as the light stubble is burned, when the ears of corn are taken off, and as hedges are set on fire by the torches, which perchance a traveller has either held too near them, or has left there, now about the break of day, thus did the God burst into a flame; thus did he burn throughout his breast, and cherish a fruitless passion with his hopes. He beholds her hair hanging unadorned upon her neck, and he says, "And what would it be if it were arranged?" He sees her eyes, like stars, sparkling with fire; he sees her lips, which it is not enough to have merely seen; he praises both her fingers and her hands, and her arms and her shoulders naked, from be-

[1] A band encircling the head, and serving to confine the tresses of the hair. A different kind was worn by maidens from that by married women. It was not worn by women of light character, or even by the female slaves who had been liberated; so that it was not only an emblem of chastity, but of freedom also.

yond the middle; whatever is hidden from view, he thinks to be still more beauteous. Swifter than the light wind she flies, and she stops not at these words of his, as he calls her back;

"O Nymph, daughter of Peneus, stay, I entreat thee! I am not an enemy following thee. In this way the lamb flies from the wolf; thus the deer flies from the lion; thus the dove flies from the eagle with trembling wing; in this way each creature flies from its enemy: love is the cause of my following thee. Ah! wretched me! shouldst thou fall on thy face, or should the brambles tear thy legs, that deserve not to be injured, and should I prove the cause of pain to thee. The places are rugged, through which thou art thus hastening; run more leisurely, I entreat thee, and restrain thy flight; I myself will follow more leisurely. And yet, enquire whom thou dost please; I am not an inhabitant of the mountains, I am not a shepherd; I am not here, in rude guise, watching the herds or the flocks. Thou knowest not, rash girl, thou knowest not from whom thou art flying, and therefore it is that thou dost fly. The Delphian land, Claros and Tenedos, and the Pataræan palace pays service to me.[1] Jupiter is my sire; by me, what shall be, what has been, and what is, is disclosed; through me, songs harmonize with the strings. My own arrow, indeed, is unerring; yet one there is still more unerring than my own, which has made this wound in my heart, before unscathed. The healing art is my discovery, and throughout the world I am honoured as the bearer of help, and the properties of simples are subjected to me. Ah, wretched me! that love is not to be cured by any herbs; and that those arts which afford relief to all, are of no avail for their master."

The daughter of Peneus flies from him, about to say still more, with timid step, and together with him she leaves his unfinished address. Then, too, she appeared lovely; the winds exposed her form to view, and the gusts meeting her, flut-

[1] Claros was a city of Ionia. Tenedos was an island of the Ægean Sea, in the neighbourhood of Troy. Patara was a city of Lycia, where Apollo gave oracular responses during six months of the year.

tered about her garments, as they came in contact, and the light breeze spread behind her her careless locks; and thus, by her flight, was her beauty increased. But the youthful God has not patience any longer to waste his blandishments; and as love urges him on, he follows her steps with hastening pace. As when the greyhound has seen the hare in the open field, and the one by the speed of his legs pursues his prey, the other seeks her safety; the one is like as if just about to fasten on the other, and now, even now, hopes to catch her, and with nose outstretched plies upon the footsteps of the hare. The other is in doubt whether she is caught already, and is delivered from his very bite, and leaves behind the mouth just touching her. And so is the God, and so is the virgin; he swift with hopes, she with fear.

Yet he that follows, aided by the wings of love, is the swifter, and denies her any rest; and is now just at her back as she flies, and is breathing upon her hair scattered upon her neck. Her strength being now spent, she grows pale, and being quite faint, with the fatigue of so swift a flight, looking upon the waters of Peneus, she says, "Give me, my father, thy aid, if you rivers have divine power. Oh Earth, either yawn to swallow me, or by changing it, destroy that form, by which I have pleased too much, and which causes me to be injured."

Hardly had she ended her prayer, when a heavy torpor seizes her limbs; and her soft breasts are covered with a thin bark. Her hair grows into green leaves, her arms into branches; her feet, the moment before so swift, adhere by sluggish roots; a leafy canopy overspreads her features; her elegance alone remains in her. This, too, Phœbus admires, and placing his right hand upon the stock, he perceives that the breast still throbs beneath the new bark; and then, embracing the branches as though limbs in his arms, he gives kisses to the wood, and yet the wood shrinks from his kisses. To her the God said: "But since thou canst not be my wife, at least thou shalt be my tree; my hair, my lyre, my quiver shall always have thee, oh laurel! Thou shalt be presented to the Latian chieftains, when the joyous voice of the soldiers shall sing the song of triumph, and the long procession shall resort to the Capitol. Thou, the same, shalt stand as a most

faithful guardian at the gate-posts of Augustus before his doors, and shalt protect the oak placed in the centre;[1] and as my head is ever youthful with unshorn locks, do thou, too, always wear the lasting honours of thy foliage."

Pæan had ended his speech; the laurel nodded assent with its new-made boughs, and seemed to shake its top just like a head.

FABLE XIII

Jupiter, pursuing Io, the daughter of Inachus, covers the earth with darkness, and ravishes the Nymph.

THERE is a grove of Hæmonia,[2] which a wood placed on a craggy rock, encloses on every side. They call it Tempe; through this the river Peneus, flowing from the bottom of mount Pindus, rolls along with its foaming waves, and in its mighty fall, gathers clouds that scatter a vapour like thin smoke, and with its spray besprinkles the tops of the woods, and wearies places, far from near to it, with its noise. This is the home, this the abode, these are the retreats of the great river; residing here in a cavern formed by rocks, he gives law to the waters, and to the Nymphs that inhabit those waters. The rivers of that country first repair thither, not knowing whether they should congratulate, or whether console the parent; the poplar-bearing Spercheus,[3] and the restless Enipeus,[4] the aged Apidanus,[5] the gentle Amphrysus,[6] and

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[1] Ovid here alludes to the civic crown of oak leaves which, by order of the senate, was placed before the gate of the Palatium, where Augustus Cæsar resided, with branches of laurel on either side of it.

[2] An ancient name of Thessaly.

[3] A rapid stream, flowing at the foot of Mount Ætna into the Malian Gulf.

[4] The Enipeus rises in Mount Othrys, and runs through Thessaly.

[5] The Apidanus, receiving the stream of the Enipeus at Pharsalia, flows into the Peneus. It is probably called "senex," as having been known and celebrated by the poets from of old.

[6] This river ran through that part of Thessaly known by the name of Phthiotis.

Æas,[1] and, soon after, the other rivers, which, as their current leads them, carry down into the sea their waves, wearied by wanderings. Inachus[2] alone is absent, and, hidden in his deepest cavern, increases his waters with his tears, and in extreme wretchedness bewails his daughter Io as lost: he knows not whether she now enjoys life, or whether she is among the shades below; but her, whom he does not find anywhere, he believes to be nowhere, and in his mind he dreads the worst.

Jupiter had seen Io as she was returning from her father's stream, and had said, "O maid, worthy of Jove, and destined to make I know not whom happy in thy marriage, repair to the shades of this lofty grove (and he pointed at the shade of the grove) while it is warm, and while the Sun is at his height, in the midst of his course. But if thou art afraid to enter the lonely abodes of the wild beasts alone, thou shalt enter the recesses of the groves, safe under the protection of a God, and that a God of no common sort; but with me, who hold the sceptre of heaven in my powerful hand; me, who hurl the wandering lightnings—Do not fly from me;" for now she was flying. And now she had left behind the pastures of Lerna,[3] and the Lircæan plains planted with trees, when the God covered the earth far and wide with darkness overspreading, and arrested her flight, and forced her modesty.

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[1] A small limpid stream, running through Epirus and Thessaly, and discharging itself into the Ionian Sea.

[2] A river of Argolis, now known as the Naio.

[3] A swampy spot on the Argive territory, where the poets say that the dragon with seven heads, called Hydra, which was slain by Hercules, had made his haunt. It is not improbable that the pestilential vapours of this spot were got rid of by means of its being drained under the superintendence of Hercules, on which fact the story was founded.

FABLE XIV

Jupiter, having changed Io into a cow, to conceal her from the jealousy of Juno, is obliged to give her to that Goddess, who commits her to the charge of the watchful Argus. Jupiter sends Mercury with an injunction to cast Argus into a deep sleep, and to take away his life.

In the meantime Juno looked down upon the midst of the fields, and wondering that the fleeting clouds had made the appearance of night under bright day, she perceived that they were not the vapours from a river, nor were they raised from the moist earth, and then she looked around to see where her husband was, as being one who by this time was full well acquainted with the intrigues of a husband who had been so often detected. After she had found him not in heaven, she said, "I am either deceived, or I am injured;" and having descended from the height of heaven, she alighted upon the earth, and commanded the mists to retire. He had foreseen the approach of his wife, and had changed the features of the daughter of Inachus into a sleek heifer. As a cow, too, she is beautiful. The daughter of Saturn, though unwillingly, extols the appearance of the cow; and likewise enquires, whose it is, and whence, or of what herd it is, as though ignorant of the truth. Jupiter falsely asserts that it was produced out of the earth, that the owner may cease to be inquired after. The daughter of Saturn begs her of him as a gift. What can he do? It is a cruel thing to deliver up his own mistress, and not to give her up is a cause of suspicion. It is shame which persuades him on the one hand, love dissuades him on the other. His shame would have been subdued by his love; but if so trifling a gift as a cow should be refused to the sharer of his descent and his couch, she might well seem not to be a cow.

The rival now being given up to her, the Goddess did not immediately lay aside all apprehension; and she was still afraid of Jupiter, and was fearful of her being stolen, until she gave her to Argus, the son of Aristor, to be kept by him. Argus had his head encircled with a hundred eyes. Two of

them used to take rest in their turns, the rest watched, and used to keep on duty. In whatever manner he stood, he looked towards Io; although turned away, he still used to have Io before his eyes. In the day time he suffers her to feed; but when the sun is below the deep earth, he shuts her up, and ties a cord round her neck undeserving of such treatment. She feeds upon the leaves of the arbute tree, and bitter herbs, and instead of a bed the unfortunate animal lies upon the earth, that does not always have grass on it, and drinks of muddy streams. And when, too, she was desirous, as a suppliant, to stretch out her arms to Argus, she had no arms to stretch out to Argus; and she uttered lowings from her mouth, when endeavouring to complain. And at this sound she was terrified, and was affrighted at her own voice.

She came, too, to the banks where she was often wont to sport, the banks of her father, Inachus; and soon as she beheld her new horns in the water, she was terrified, and, astonished, she recoiled from herself. The Naiads knew her not, and Inachus himself knew her not, who she was; but she follows her father, and follows her sisters, and suffers herself to be touched, and presents herself to them, as they admire her. The aged Inachus held her some grass he had plucked; she licks his hand, and gives kisses to the palms of her father. Nor does she restrain her tears; and if only words would follow, she would implore his aid, and would declare her name and misfortunes. Instead of words, letters, which her foot traced in the dust, completed the sad discovery of the transformation of her body. "Ah, wretched me!" exclaims her father Inachus; and clinging to the horns and the neck of the snow-white cow, as she wept, he repeats, "Ah, wretched me! and art thou my daughter, that hast been sought for by me throughout all lands? While undiscovered, thou wast a lighter grief to me, than now, when thou art found. Thou art silent, and no words dost thou return in answer to mine; thou only heavest sighs from the depth of thy breast, and what alone thou art able to do, thou answerest in lowings to my words. But I, in ignorance of this, was preparing the bridal chamber, and the nuptial torches for thee; and my chief hope was that of a son-in-law, my next was that of grandchildren.

But now must thou have a mate from the herd, now, too, an offspring of the herd. Nor is it possible for me to end grief so great by death; but it is a detriment to be a God; and the gate of death being shut against me, extends my grief to eternal ages."

While thus he lamented, the starry Argus removed her away, and carried the daughter, thus taken from her father, to distant pastures. He himself, at a distance, occupies the lofty top of a mountain, whence, as he sits, he may look about on all sides.

Nor can the ruler of the Gods above, any longer endure so great miseries of the granddaughter of Phoroneus;[1] and he calls his son Mercury, whom the bright Pleiad, Maia,[2] brought forth, and orders him to put Argus to death. There is but little delay to take wings upon his feet, and his soporiferous wand[3] in his hand, and a cap for his hair.[4] After he had put these things in order, the son of Jupiter leaps down from his father's high abode upon the earth, and there he takes off his cap, and lays aside his wings; his wand alone was retained. With this, as a shepherd, he drives some she goats through the pathless country, taken up as he passed along, and plays upon oaten straws joined together.

The keeper appointed by Juno, charmed by the sound of this new contrivance, says, "Whoever thou art, thou mayst be seated with me upon this stone; for, indeed, in no other place is the herbage more abundant for thy flock; and thou seest, too, that the shade is convenient for the shepherds." The son of Atlas sat down, and with much talking he occupied the passing day with his discourse, and by playing upon his joined reeds he tried to overpower his watchful eyes. Yet

[1] The father of Jasius and of Inachus, the parent of Io.

[2] One of the seven daughters of Atlas, who were styled Pleiädes after they were received among the constellations.

[3] The "caduceus," or staff, with which Mercury summoned the souls of the departed from the shades, induced slumber, and did other offices pertaining to his capacity as the herald and messenger of Jupiter. It was represented as an olive branch, wreathed with two snakes.

[4] Called "Petasus." It had broad brims.

the other strives hard to overcome soft sleep; and although sleep was received by a part of his eyes, yet with a part he still keeps watch. He enquires also, (for the pipe had been but lately invented) by what method it had been found out.

FABLE XV

Pan, falling in love with the Nymph Syrinx, she flies from him; on which he pursues her. Syrinx, arrested in her flight by the waves of the river Ladon, invokes the aid of her sisters, the Naiads, who change her into reeds. Pan unites them into an instrument with seven pipes, which bears the name of the Nymph.

THEN the God says, "In the cold mountains of Arcadia, among the Hamadryads of Nonacris,[1] there was one Naiad very famous; the Nymphs called her Syrinx. And not once alone had she escaped the Satyrs as they pursued, and whatever Gods either the shady grove or the fruitful fields have in them. In her pursuits and her virginity itself she used to devote herself to the Ortygian Goddess,[2] and being clothed after the fashion of Diana, she might have deceived one, and might have been supposed to be the daughter of Latona, if she had not had a bow of cornel wood, the other, a bow of gold; and even then did she sometimes deceive people. Pan spies her as she is returning from the hill of Lycæus, and having his head crowned with sharp pine leaves, he utters such words as these;" it remained for Mercury to repeat the words, and how that the Nymph, slighting his suit, fled through pathless spots, until she came to the gentle stream of sandy Ladon;[3] and that here, the waters stopping her course, she prayed to her watery sisters, that they would change her; and how that Pan, when he was thinking that Syrinx was now caught by

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[1] Nonacris was the name of both a mountain and a city of Arcadia, in the Peloponnesus.

[2] Diana is called "Ortygian," from the isle of Delos, where she was born, one of whose names was Ortygia, from the quantity of quails, *ortuges*, there found.

[3] A beautiful river of Arcadia, flowing into the Alpheus.

him, had seized hold of some reeds of the marsh, instead of the body of the Nymph; and how, while he was sighing there, the winds moving amid the reeds had made a murmuring noise, and like one complaining; and how that, charmed by this new discovery and the sweetness of the sound, he had said, "This mode of converse with thee shall ever remain with me;" and that accordingly, unequal reeds being stuck together among themselves by a cement of wax, had since retained the name of the damsel.

FABLE XVI

Mercury, having lulled Argus to sleep, cuts off his head, and Juno places his eyes in the peacock's tail.

The Cyllenian God[1] being about to say such things, perceived that all his eyes were sunk in sleep, and that his sight was wrapped in slumber. At once he puts an end to his song, and strengthens his slumbers, stroking his languid eyes with his magic wand. There is no delay; he wounds him, as he nods, with his crooked sword, where the head is joined to the neck; and casts him, all blood-stained, from the rock, and stains the craggy cliff with his gore.

Argus, thou liest low, and the light which thou hadst in so many eyes is now extinguished; and one night takes possession of a whole hundred eyes. The daughter of Saturn takes them, and places them on the feathers of her own bird, and she fills its tail with starry gems.

FABLE XVII

Io, terrified and maddened with dreadful visions, runs over many regions, and stops in Egypt, when Juno, at length, being pacified, restores her to her former shape, and permits her to be worshipped there, under the name of Isis.

Immediately, she was inflamed with rage, and deferred not the time of expressing her wrath; and she presented a dreadful Fury before the eyes and thoughts of the Argive

[1] Mercury is so called from Cyllene, in Arcadia, where he was born.

mistress. and buried in her bosom invisible stings, and drove her, in her fright, a wanderer through the whole earth. Thou, O Nile, didst remain, as the utmost boundary of her long wanderings. Soon as she arrived there, she fell upon her knees, placed on the edge of the bank, and raising herself up, with her neck thrown back, and casting to Heaven those looks which then alone she could, by her groans, and her tears, and her mournful lowing, she seemed to be complaining of Jupiter, and to be begging an end of her sorrows.

He, embracing the neck of his wife with his arms, entreats her, at length, to put an end to her punishment; and he says, "Lay aside thy fears for the future; she shall never more be the occasion of any trouble to thee;" and then he bids the Stygian waters to hear this oath. As soon as the Goddess is pacified, Io receives her former shape, and she becomes what she was before; the hairs flee from off her body, her horns decrease, and the orb of her eye becomes less; the opening of her jaw is contracted; her shoulders and her hands return, and her hoof, vanishing, is disposed of into five nails; nothing of the cow remains to her, but the whiteness of her appearance; and the Nymph, contented with the service of two feet, is raised erect on them; and yet she is afraid to speak, lest she should low like a cow, and timorously tries again the words so long interrupted. Now, as a Goddess, she is worshipped by the linen-wearing throng of Egypt.[1]

To her, at length, Epaphus[2] is believed to have been born from the seed of great Jove, and throughout the cities he possesses temples joined to those of his parent. Phaëton, sprung from the Sun, was equal to him in spirit and in years; whom formerly, as he uttered great boasts, and yielded not at all to him, and proud of his father, Phœbus, the grandson of Inachus could not endure; and said, "Thou, like a madman, be-

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[1] The priests, and worshippers of Isis, with whom Io is here said to be identical, paid their adoration to her clothed in linen vestments. Probably, Isis was the first to teach the Egyptians the cultivation of flax.

[2] Herodotus, in his second book, tells us, that this son of Jupiter, by Io, was the same as the Egyptian God, Apis.

lievest thy mother in all things, and art puffed up with conceit of an imaginary father."

Phaëton blushed, and in shame repressed his resentment; and he reported to his mother, Clymene,[1] the reproaches of Epaphus; and said, "Mother, to grieve thee still more, I, the free, the bold youth, was silent; I am ashamed both that these reproaches can be uttered against us, and that they cannot be refuted; but do thou, if only I am born of a divine race, give me some proof of so great a descent, and claim me for heaven." Thus he spoke, and threw his arms around the neck of his mother; and besought her, by his own head and by that of Merops,[2] and by the nuptial torches of his sisters, that she would give him some token of his real father.

It is a matter of doubt whether Clymene was more moved by the entreaties of Phaëton, or by resentment at the charge made against her; and she raised both her arms to heaven, and, looking up to the light of the Sun, she said, "Son, I swear to thee, by this beam, bright with shining rays, which both hears and sees us, that thou, that thou, I say, wast begotten by this Sun, which thou beholdst; by this Sun, which governs the world. If I utter an untruth, let him deny himself to be seen by me, and let this light prove the last for my eyes.

Nor will it be any prolonged trouble for thee to visit thy father's dwelling; the abode where he arises is contiguous to our regions.[3] If only thy inclination disposes thee, go forth, and thou shalt inquire of himself."

Phaëton immediately springs forth, overjoyed, upon these words of his mother, and reaches the skies in imagination; and he passes by his own Æthiopians, and the Indians situate beneath the rays of the Sun, and briskly wends his way to the rising of his sire.

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[1] A Nymph of the sea, the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys.

[2] King of Ethiopia, and, marrying the Nymph Clymene, the stepfather of Phaëton.

[3] Ethiopia, which, in the time of Ovid, was looked upon as one of the regions of the East.

BOOK THE SECOND

FABLE I

Phaëton, insulted by Epaphus, goes to the Palace of Apollo, to beseech him to give some token that he is his son. Apollo having sworn, by the river Styx, to refuse him nothing that he should desire, he immediately asks to guide his chariot for one day. He is unsuccessful in the attempt, and, the horses running away, the world is in danger of being consumed.

The palace of the Sun was raised high, on stately columns, bright with radiant gold, and carbuncle that rivals the flames; polished ivory covered its highest top, and double folding doors shone with the brightness of silver. The workmanship even exceeded the material; for there Mulciber had carved the sea circling round the encompassed Earth; and the orb of the Earth, and the Heavens which hang over that orb. There the waves have in them the azure Deities, both Triton, sounding with his shell, and the changing Proteus, and Ægeon,[1] pressing the huge backs of whales with his arms; Doris,[2] too, and her daughters, part of whom appear to be swimming, part, sitting on the bank, to be drying their green hair; some are seen borne upon fishes. The features in all are not the same, nor, however, remarkably different; they are such as those of sisters ought to be. The Earth has upon it men and cities, and woods, and wild beasts, and rivers, and Nymphs, and other Deities of the country. Over these is placed the figure of the shining Heaven, and there are six Signs of the Zodiac on the right door, and as many on the left.

Soon as the son of Clymene had arrived thither by an ascending path, and entered the house of his parent, thus

[1] Homer makes him to be the same with Briareus. According to another account, which Ovid here follows, he was a sea God, the son of Oceanus and Terra.

[2] The daughter of Oceanus, the wife of Nereus, and the mother of the fifty Nereids.

doubted of; he immediately turned his steps to the presence of his father, and stood at a distance, for he could not bear the refulgence nearer. Arrayed in a purple garment, Phœbus was seated on a throne sparkling with brilliant emeralds. On his right hand, and on his left, the Days, the Months, the Years, the Ages, and the Hours were arranged, at corresponding distances, and the fresh Spring was standing, crowned with a chaplet of blossoms; Summer was standing naked, and wearing garlands made of ears of corn; Autumn, too, was standing besmeared with the trodden-out grapes; and icy Winter, rough with his hoary hair.

Then the Sun, from the midst of this place, with those eyes with which he beholds all things, sees the young man struck with fear at the novelty of these things, and says, "What is the occasion of thy journey hither? What dost thou seek, Phaëton, in this my palace, a son not to be denied by his parent?"

He answers, "O thou universal Light of the unbounded World, Phœbus, my father, if thou grantest me the use of that name; and if Clymene is not concealing an error under a false pretext, give me, my parent, some token, by which I may be believed to be really thy progeny; and remove this uncertainty from my mind." Thus he spoke; but his parent took off the rays shining all around his head, and commanded him to come nearer; and, having embraced him, he says, "And neither art thou deserving to be denied to be mine, and Clymene has told thee thy true origin; and that thou mayst have the less doubt, ask any gift thou mayst please, that thou mayst receive it from me bestowing it. Let the lake, by which the Gods are wont to swear, and which is unseen, even by my eyes, be as a witness of my promise."

Hardly had he well finished, when he asks for his father's chariot, and for the command and guidance of the wing-footed horses for one day. His father repented that he had so sworn, and shaking his splendid head three or four times, he said, "By thine have my words been made rash. I wish I were allowed not to grant what I have promised! I confess, my son, that this alone I would deny thee. Still, I may dissuade thee: thy desire is not attended with safety. Thou de-

sirest, Phaëton, a gift too great, and one which is suited neither to thy strength, nor to such youthful years. Thy lot is that of a mortal; that which thou desirest, belongs not to mortals. Nay, thou aimest, in thy ignorance, at even more than it is allowed the Gods above to obtain. Let every one be self-satisfied, if he likes; still, with the exception of myself, no one is able to take his stand upon the fire-bearing axle-tree. Even the Ruler of vast Olympus, who hurls the ruthless bolts with his terrific right hand, cannot guide this chariot; and yet, what have we greater than Jupiter? The first part of the road is steep, and such as the horses, though fresh in the morning, can hardly climb. In the middle of the heavens it is high aloft, from whence it is often a source of fear, even to myself, to look down upon the sea and earth, and my breast trembles with fearful apprehensions. The last stage is a steep descent, and requires a sure command of the horses. Then, too, Tethys[1] herself, who receives me in her waves, extended below, is often wont to fear, lest I should be borne headlong from above. Besides, the heavens are carried round with a constant rotation, and carry with them the lofty stars, and whirl them with rapid revolution. Against this I have to contend; and that force which overcomes all other things, does not overcome me; and I am carried in a contrary direction to the rapid world. Suppose the chariot given to thee; what couldst thou do? Couldst thou proceed, opposed to the whirling poles, so that the rapid heavens should not carry thee away? Perhaps, too, thou dost fancy in thy mind that there are groves, and cities of the Gods, and temples enriched with gifts; whereas, the way is through dangers, and the forms of wild beasts;[2] and though thou shouldst keep on thy road, and be drawn aside by no wanderings, still thou must pass amid the horns of the threatening Bull, and the Hæmonian bow,[3] and before the visage of the raging Lion, and the Scorpion,

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[1] Daughter of Cœlus and Terra, and the wife of Oceanus. Her name is here used to signify the ocean itself.

[2] The signs of the Zodiac.

[3] Ovid here alludes to the Thessalian Chiron, the Centaur, who was placed in the Zodiac as the Constellation Sagittarius.

bending his cruel claws with a wide compass, and the Crab, that bends his claws in a different manner; nor is it easy for thee to govern the steeds spirited by those fires which they have in their breasts, and which they breathe forth from their mouths and their nostrils. Hardly are they restrained by me, when their high-mettled spirit is once heated, and their necks struggle against the reins. But do thou have a care, my son, that I be not the occasion of a gift fatal to thee, and while the matter still permits, alter thy intentions. Thou askest, forsooth, a sure proof that thou mayst believe thyself sprung from my blood? I give thee a sure proof in thus being alarmed for thee; and by my paternal apprehensions, I am shown to be thy father. Lo, behold my countenance! I wish, too, that thou couldst direct thy eyes into my breast, and discover my fatherly concern within! Finally, look around thee, upon whatever the rich world contains, and ask for anything out of the blessings, so many and so great, of heaven, of earth, and of sea, and thou shalt suffer no denial. In this one thing alone I beg to be excused, which, called by its right name, is a penalty, and not an honour; thou art asking, Phaëton, a punishment instead of a gift. Why, in thy ignorance, art thou embracing my neck with caressing arms? Doubt not; whatever thou shalt desire shall be granted thee (by the Stygian waves I have sworn it); but do thou make thy desire more considerately."

He had finished his admonitions; and yet Phaëton resists his advice, and presses his point, and burns with eagerness for the chariot. Wherefore, his parent having delayed as long as he could, leads the young man to the lofty chariot, the gift of Vulcan. The axle-tree was of gold, the poles were of gold; the circumference of the exterior of the wheel was of gold; the range of the spokes was of silver. Chrysolites and gems placed along the yoke in order, gave a bright light from the reflected sun. And while the aspiring Phaëton is admiring these things, and is examining the workmanship, behold! the watchful Aurora opened her purple doors in the ruddy east, and her halls filled with roses. The stars disappear, the troops whereof Lucifer gathers, and moves the last from his station in the heavens. But the father Titan, when he beheld

the earth and the universe growing red, and the horns of the far-distant Moon, as if about to vanish, orders the swift Hours to yoke the horses. The Goddesses speedily perform his commands, and lead forth the steeds from the lofty stalls, snorting forth flames, and filled with the juice of Ambrosia; and then they put on the sounding bits.

Then the father touched the face of his son with a hallowed drug, and made it able to endure the burning flames, and placed the rays upon his locks, and fetching from his troubled heart sighs presaging his sorrow, he said: "If thou canst here at least, my boy, obey the advice of thy father, be sparing of the whip, and use the bridle with nerve. Of their own accord they are wont to hasten on; the difficulty is to check them in their full career. And let not the way attract thee through the five direct circles.[1] There is a track cut obliquely, with a broad curvature, and bounded by the extremities of three zones, and so it shuns the South pole, and the Bear united to the North. Let thy way be here; thou wilt perceive distinct traces of the wheels. And that heaven and earth may endure equal heat, neither drive too low, nor urge the chariot along the summit of the sky. Going forth too high, thou wilt set on fire the signs of the heavens; too low, the earth; in the middle course thou wilt go most safely. Neither let the right wheel bear thee off towards the twisted Serpent, not let the left lead thee to the low Altar; hold thy course between them. The rest I leave to Fortune, who, I pray, may aid thee, and take more care of thee, than thou dost of thyself. Whilst I am speaking, the moist Night has touched the goals placed on the Western shores; delay is not allowed me. I am required; the Morning is shining forth, the darkness being dispersed. Seize the reins with thy hands; or if thou hast a mind capable of change, make use of my advice, and not my chariot, while thou art still able, and art even yet standing upon solid ground; and while thou art not yet in thy ignorance filling the chariot that thou didst so unfortunately covet."

The other leaps into the light chariot with his youthful

[1] Phœbus here counsels Phaëton what track to follow, and tells him to pursue his way by an oblique path, and not directly in the plane of the equator.

body, and stands aloft, and rejoices to take in his hand the reins presented to him, and then gives thanks to his reluctant parent. In the meantime the swift Pyroeis, and Eoüs and Æthon, the horses of the sun, and Phlegon, making the fourth, fill the air with neighings, sending forth flames, and beat the barriers with their feet. After Tethys, ignorant of the destiny of her grandson, had removed these, and the scope of the boundless universe was given them, they take the road, and moving their feet through the air, they cleave the resisting clouds, and raised aloft by their wings, they pass by the East winds that had arisen from the same parts. But the weight was light; and such as the horses of the sun could not feel; and the yoke was deficient of its wonted weight. And as the curving ships, without proper ballast, are tossed about, and unsteady, through their too great lightness, are borne through the sea, so does the chariot give bounds in the air, unimpeded by its usual burden, and is tossed on high, and is just like an empty one.

Soon as the steeds have perceived this, they rush on, and leave the beaten track, and run not in the order in which they did before. He himself becomes alarmed; and knows not which way to turn the reins entrusted to him, nor does he know where the way is, nor, if he did know, could he control them. Then, for the first time, did the cold Triones grow warm with sunbeams, and attempt, in vain, to be dipped in the sea that was forbidden to them. And the Serpent which is situate next to the icy pole, being before torpid with cold, and formidable to no one, grew warm, and regained new rage from the heat. They say, too, that thou, Boötes, being disturbed, took to flight; although thou wast but slow, and thy wain impeded thee. But when, from the height of the skies, the unhappy Phaëton looked down upon the earth, lying far, very far beneath, he grew pale, and his knees shook with a sudden terror; and in a light so great, darkness overspread his eyes. And now he could wish that he had never touched the horses of his father; and now he is sorry that he knew his descent, and that he prevailed in his request; now desiring to be called the son of Merops. He is borne along, just as a ship driven by the furious Boreas, to which its pilot has given up

the overpowered helm, and which he has resigned to the Gods and the effect of his supplications. What can he do? much of heaven is left behind his back; still more is before his eyes. Either space he measures in his mind; and at one moment he is looking forward to the West, which it is not allowed him by fate to reach; and sometimes he looks back upon the East. Ignorant what to do, he is stupified; and he neither lets go the reins, nor is he able to retain them; nor does he know the names of the horses. In his fright, too, he sees strange objects scattered everywhere in various parts of the heavens, and the forms of huge wild beasts. There is a spot where the Scorpion bends his arms into two curves, and with his tail and claws bending on either side, he extends his limbs through the space of two signs of the Zodiac. As soon as the youth beheld him wet with the sweat of black venom, and threatening wounds with the barbed point of his tail, bereft of sense, he let go the reins in a chill of horror. Soon as they, falling down, have touched the top of their backs, the horses range at large; and no one restraining them, they go through the air of an unknown region; and where their fury drives them thither, without check, do they hurry along, and they rush on to the stars fixed in the sky, and drag the chariot through pathless places. One while they are mounting aloft, and now they are borne through steep places, and along headlong paths in a tract nearer to the earth.

The Moon, too, wonders that her brother's horses run lower than her own, and the scorched clouds send forth smoke. As each region is most elevated, it is caught by the flames, and cleft, it makes vast chasms, and becomes dry, its moisture being carried away. The grass grows pale; the trees, with their foliage, are burnt up; and the dry standing corn affords fuel for its own destruction. But I am complaining of trifling ills. Great cities perish, together with their fortifications, and the flames turn whole nations, with their populations, into ashes; woods, together with mountains, are on fire. Athos burns, and the Cilician Taurus, and Tmolus, and Œta, and Ida, now dry, but once most famed for its springs; and Helicon, the resort of the Virgin Muses, and Hœmus,[1] not yet called Œa-

[1] This, which is now called the Balkan range, was a lofty chain of mountains running through Thrace. Orpheus, the son of Œagrus

grian. Ætna[1] burns intensely with redoubled flames, and Parnassus, with its two summits, and Eryx, and Cynthus, and Othrys, and Rhodope,[2] at length to be despoiled of its snows, and Mimas, and Dindyma, and Mycale, and Cithæron,[3] created for the performance of sacred rites. Nor does its cold avail even Scythia; Caucasus is on fire, and Ossa with Pindus, and Olympus, greater than them both, and the lofty Alps, and the cloud-bearing Apennines.

Then, indeed, Phaëton beholds the world set on fire on all sides, and he cannot endure heat so great, and he inhales with his mouth scorching air, as though from a deep furnace, and perceives his own chariot to be on fire. And neither is he able now to bear the ashes and the emitted embers; and, on every side, he is involved in heated smoke. Covered with a pitchy darkness, he knows not whither he is going, nor where he is, and is hurried away at the pleasure of the winged steeds. They believe that it was then that the nations of the Æthiopians contracted their black hue, the blood being attracted into the surface of the body. Then was Libya[4] made dry by the heat, the moisture being carried off; then, with dishevelled hair, the Nymphs lamented the springs and the lakes. Bœotia bewails Dirce,[5] Argos Amymone,[6] and Ephyre,[7] the waters of

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and Calliope, was there torn in pieces by the Mænades, or Bacchanalian women, whence the mountain obtained the epithet of "Œagrian."

[1] This is the volcanic mountain of Sicily; the flames caused by the fall of Phaëton, added to its own, caused them to be redoubled.

[2] A high mountain, capped with perpetual snows, in the northern part of Thrace.

[3] A mountain of Bœotia, famous for the orgies of Bacchus, there celebrated.

[4] A region between Mauritania and Cyrene, here used for the whole of Africa.

[5] Dirce was a celebrated fountain of Bœotia, into which it was said that Dirce, the wife of Lycus, king of Thebes, was transformed.

[6] It was a fountain of Argos, near Lerna, into which the Nymph, Amymone, the daughter of Lycus, king of the Argives, was said to have been transformed.

[7] It was the most ancient name of Corinth, in the citadel of which, or the Acrocorinthus, was the spring Pyrene, of extreme brightness and purity, and sacred to the Muses.

Pirene. Nor do rivers that have got banks distant in situation, remain secure; Tanais smokes in the midst of its waters, and the aged Peneus, and Teuthrantian Cäicus,[1] and rapid Ismenus, with Phocean Erymanthus, and Xanthus[2] again to burn, and yellow Lycormas, and Mæander,[3] which sports with winding streams, and the Mygdonian Melas,[4] and the Tænarian Eurotas.[5] The Babylonian Euphrates, too, was on fire, Orontes was in flames, and the swift Thermodon and Ganges, and Phasis, and Ister.[6] Alpheus boils; the banks of Spercheus burn; and the gold which Tagus carries with its stream, melts in the flames. The river birds too, which made famous the Mæonian[7] banks of the river with their song, grew hot in the middle of Cayster. The Nile, affrighted, fled to the remotest parts of the earth, and concealed his head, which still lies hid; his seven last months are empty, become seven mere channels, without any stream. The same fate dries up the Ismarian rivers, Hebrus together with Strymon, and the Hesperian streams, the Rhine, and the Rhone, and the Po, and the Tiber, to which was promised the sovereignty of the world.

All the ground bursts asunder; and through the chinks, the light penetrates into Tartarus, and startles the Infernal King with his spouse. The Ocean too, is contracted, and that which lately was sea, is a surface of parched sand; and the mountains which the deep sea had covered, start up, and in-

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[1] A river of Mysia, here called "Teuthrantian," from Mount Teuthras, in its vicinity.

[2] A river of Troy; here spoken of as destined to behold flames a second time, in the conflagration of that city.

[3] A river of Phrygia, flowing between Lydia and Caria; it was said to have 600 windings in its course.

[4] *i. e.*, Black.

[5] A river of Laconia, which flowed under the walls of the city of Sparta, and discharged itself into the sea near the promontory of Tænarus, now called Cape Matapan.

[6] The Danube had that name from its source to the confines of Germany; and thence, in its course through Scythia to the sea, it was called by the name of "Ister."

[7] Mæonia was so called from the River Mæon, and was another name of Lydia. The Cayster, famous for its swans, flowed through Lydia.

crease the number of the scattered Cyclades.[1] The fishes sink to the bottom, and the crooked Dolphins do not care to raise themselves on the surface into the air, as usual. The bodies of sea calves float lifeless on their backs, on the top of the water. The story, too, is, that even Nereus himself, and Doris and their daughters, lay hid in the heated caverns. Three times had Neptune ventured, with a stern countenance, to thrust his arms out of the water; three times he was unable to endure the scorching heat of the air. However, the genial Earth, as she was surrounded with sea, amid the waters of the main, and the springs, dried up on every side, which had hidden themselves in the bowels of their cavernous parent, burnt-up, lifted up her all-productive face as far as her neck, and placed her hands to her forehead, and shaking all things with a vast trembling, she sank down a little, and retired below the spot where she is wont to be, and thus she spoke, with a parched voice: "O sovereign of the Gods, if thou approvest of this, if I have deserved it, why do thy lightnings linger? Let me, if doomed to perish by the force of fire, perish by thy flames; and alleviate my misfortune, by being the author of it. With difficulty, indeed, do I open my mouth for these very words;" (the vapour had oppressed her utterance). "Behold my scorched hair, and such a quantity of ashes over my eyes, so much, too, over my features. And dost thou give this as my recompense? this, as the reward of my fertility and of my duty, in that I endure wounds from the crooked plough and harrows, and am harassed all the year through? In that I supply green leaves for the cattle, and corn, a wholesome food for mankind, and frankincense for yourselves? But still, suppose that I am deserving of destruction, why have the waves deserved this? Why has thy brother deserved it? Why do the seas, delivered to him by lot, decrease, and why do they recede still further from the sky? But if regard for neither thy brother nor for myself influences thee, still have consideration for thy own skies; look around, on either side, how each pole is smoking; if the fire shall in-

[1] The Cyclades were a cluster of islands in the Ægean Sea, surrounding Delos as though with a circle, whence their name.

jure them, thy palace will fall in ruins. See! Atlas[1] himself is struggling, and hardly can he bear the glowing heavens on his shoulders. If the sea, if the earth perishes, if the palace of heaven, we are thrown into the confused state of ancient chaos. Save it from the flames, if aught still survives, and provide for the preservation of the universe."

Thus spoke the Earth; nor, indeed, could she any longer endure the vapour, nor say more; and she withdrew her face within herself, and the caverns neighbouring to the shades below.

FABLE II

Jupiter, to save the universe from being consumed, hurls his thunder at Phaëton, on which he falls headlong into the river Eridanus.

But the omnipotent father, having called the Gods above to witness, and him, too, who had given the chariot to Phaëton, that unless he gives assistance, all things will perish in direful ruin, mounts aloft to the highest eminence, from which he is wont to spread the clouds over the spacious earth; from which he moves his thunders, and hurls the brandished lightnings. But then, he had neither clouds that he could draw over the earth, nor showers that he could pour down from the sky. He thundered aloud, and darted the poised lightning from his right ear against the charioteer, and at the same moment deprived him both of his life and his seat, and by his ruthless fires restrained the flames. The horses are affrighted, and making a bound in an opposite direction, they shake the yoke from off their necks, and disengage themselves from the torn harness. In one place lie the reins; in another, the axle-tree wrenched away from the pole; in another part are the spokes of the broken wheels; and the fragments of the chariot torn in pieces are scattered far and wide. But Phaëton, the flames consuming his yellow hair, is hurled headlong, and is borne in a long tract through the air; as sometimes a star

[1] A mountain of Mauritania, which, by reason of its height, was said to support the heavens.

from the serene sky may appear to fall, although it really has not fallen. Him the great Eridanus receives, in a part of the world far distant from his country, and bathes his foaming face.

FABLE III

The sisters of Phaëton are changed into poplars, and their tears become amber distilling from those trees.

The Hesperian Naiads[1] commit his body, smoking from the three-forked flames, to the tomb, and inscribe these verses on the stone:—"Here is Phaëton buried, the driver of his father's chariot, which if he did not manage, still he miscarried in a great attempt." But his wretched father had hidden his face, overcast with bitter sorrow, and, if only we can believe it, they say that one day passed without the sun. The flames afforded light; and so far, there was some advantage in that disaster. But Clymene, after she had said whatever things were to be said amid misfortunes so great, traversed the whole earth, full of woe, and distracted, and tearing her bosom. And first seeking his lifeless limbs, and then his bones, she found his bones, however, buried on a foreign bank. She laid herself down on the spot; and bathed with tears the name she read on the marble, and warmed it with her open breast. The daughters of the Sun mourn no less, and give tears, an unavailing gift, to his death; and beating their breasts with their hands, they call Phaëton both night and day, who is doomed not to hear their sad complaints; and they lie scattered about the tomb.

The Moon had four times filled her disk, by joining her horns; they, according to their custom, (for use had made custom) uttered lamentations; among whom Phaëthusa, the eldest of the sisters, when she was desirous to lie on the ground, complained that her feet had grown stiff; to whom the fair Lampetie attempting to come, was detained by a root

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[1] These were the Naiads of Italy. They were by name Phaëthusa, Lampetie, and Phœbe.

suddenly formed. A third, when she is endeavouring to tear her hair with her hands, tears off leaves; one complains that her legs are held fast by the trunk of a tree, another that her arms are become long branches. And while they are wondering at these things, bark closes upon their loins; and by degrees, it encompasses their stomachs, their breasts, their shoulders, and their hands; and only their mouths are left uncovered, calling upon their mother. What is their mother to do? but run here and there, whither frenzy leads her, and join her lips with theirs, while yet she may? That is not enough; she tries to pull their bodies out of the trunks of the trees, and with her hands to tear away the tender branches; but from whence drops of blood flow as from a wound. Whichever of them is wounded, cries out, "Spare me, mother, O spare me, I pray; in the tree my body is being torn. And now farewell." The bark came over the last words.

Thence tears flow forth; and amber distilling from the new-formed branches, hardens in the sun; which the clear river receives and sends to be worn by the Latian matrons.

FABLE IV

Cycnus, king of Liguria, inconsolable for the death of Phaëton, is transformed into a swan.

Cycnus, the son of Sthenelus, was present at this strange event; who, although he was related to thee, Phaëton, on his mother's side, was yet more nearly allied in affection. He having left his kingdom, (for he reigned over the people and the great cities of the Ligurians[1]) was filling the verdant banks of the river Eridanus, and the wood, now augmented by the sisters, with his complaints; when the man's voice became shrill, and grey feathers concealed his hair. A long neck, too, extends from his breast, and a membrane joins his reddening toes; feathers clothe his sides, and his mouth holds

[1] A people situate on the eastern side of Etruria, between the rivers Var and Macra. The Grecian writers were in the habit of styling the whole of the north of Italy Liguria.

a bill without a point. Cycnus becomes a new bird; but he trusts himself not to the heavens or the air, as being mindful of the fire unjustly sent from thence. He frequents the pools and the wide lakes, and abhorring fire, he chooses the streams, the very contrary of flames.

Meanwhile, the father of Phaëton, in squalid garb, and destitute of his comeliness, just as he is wont to be when he suffers an eclipse of his disk, abhors both the light, himself, and the day; and gives his mind up to grief, and adds resentment to his sorrow, and denies his services to the world. "My lot," says he, "has been restless enough from the very beginning of time, and I am tired of labours endured by me, without end and without honour. Let any one else drive the chariot that carries the light. If there is one, and all the Gods confess that they cannot do it, let Jupiter himself drive it; that, at least, while he is trying my reins, he may for a time lay aside the lightnings that bereave fathers. Then he will know, having made trial of the strength of the flame-footed steeds, that he who did not successfully guide them, did not deserve death."

All the Deities stand around the Sun, as he says such things; and they entreat him with suppliant voice, not to determine to bring darkness over the world. Jupiter, as well, excuses the hurling of his lightnings, and imperiously adds threats to entreaties. Phœbus calls together his steeds, maddened and still trembling with terror, and subduing them, vents his fury both with whip and lash; for he is furious, and upbraids them with his son, and charges his death upon them.

FABLE V.

Jupiter, while taking a survey of the world, to extinguish the remains of the fire, falls in love with Calisto, whom he sees in Arcadia; and, in order to seduce that Nymph, he assumes the form of Diana. Her sister Nymphs disclose her misfortune before the Goddess, who drives her from her company, on account of the violation of her vow of chastity.

But the omnipotent father surveys the vast walls of heaven, and carefully searches, that no part, impaired by the violence

of the fire, may fall to ruin. After he has seen them to be secure and in their own full strength, he examines the earth, and the works of man; yet a care for his own Arcadia is more particularly his object. He restores, too, the springs and the rivers, that had not yet dared to flow, he gives grass to the earth; green leaves to the trees; and orders the injured forests again to be green. While thus he often went to and fro, he stopped short on seeing a virgin of Nonacris, and the fires engendered within his bones received fresh heat. It was not her employment to soften the wool by teasing, nor to vary her tresses in their arrangement; while a buckle fastened her garment, and a white fillet her hair, carelessly flowing; and at one time she bore in her hand a light javelin, at another, a bow. She was a warrior of Phœbe; nor did any Nymph frequent Mænalus, more beloved by Trivia,[1] than she; but no influence is of long duration. The lofty Sun had now obtained a position beyond the mid course, when she enters a grove which no generation has ever cut. Here she puts her quiver off from her shoulders, and unbends her pliant bow, and lies down on the ground, which the grass had covered, and presses her painted quiver, with her neck laid on it. When Jupiter saw her thus weary, and without a protector, he said, "For certain, my wife will know nothing of this stolen embrace; or, if she should chance to know, is her scolding, is it, I say, of such great consequence?"

Immediately he puts on the form and dress of Diana, and says, "O Virgin! one portion of my train, upon what mountains hast thou been hunting?" The virgin raises herself from the turf, and says, "Hail, Goddess! that art, in my opinion, greater than Jove, even if he himself should hear it." He both smiles and he hears it, and is pleased at being preferred to himself; and he gives her kisses, not very moderate, nor such as would be given by a virgin. He stops her as she

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[1] An epithet of Diana, as presiding over and worshipped in the places where three roads met, which were called "trivia." Being known as Diana on earth, the Moon in the heavens, and Proserpine in the infernal regions, she was represented at these places with three faces; those of a horse, a female, and a dog.

is preparing to tell him in what wood she has been hunting, by an embrace, and he does not betray himself without the commission of violence. She, indeed, on the other hand, as far as a woman could do, (would that thou hadst seen her, daughter of Saturn, then thou wouldst have been more merciful) she, indeed, I say, resists; but what damsel, or who besides, could prevail against Jupiter? Jove, now the conqueror, seeks the heavens above; the grove and the conscious wood is now her aversion. Making her retreat thence, she is almost forgetting to take away her quiver with her arrows, and the bow which she had hung up.

Behold, Dictynna,[1] attended by her train, as she goes along the lofty Mænalus, and exulting in the slaughter of the wild beasts, beholds her, and calls her, thus seen. Being so called, she drew back, and at first was afraid lest Jupiter might be under her shape; but after she saw the Nymphs walking along with her, she perceived there was no deceit, and she approached their train. Alas! how difficult it is not to betray a crime by one's looks. She scarce raises her eyes from the ground, nor, as she used to do, does she walk by the side of the Goddess, nor is she the foremost in the whole company; but she is silent, and by her blushes she gives sign of her injured honour. And Diana, but for the fact, that she is a virgin, might have perceived her fault by a thousand indications: the Nymphs are said to have perceived it.

The horns of the Moon were now rising again in her ninth course, when the hunting Goddess, faint from her brother's flames, lighted on a cool grove, out of which a stream ran, flowing with its murmuring noise, and borne along the sand worn fine by its action. When she had approved of the spot, she touched the surface of the water with her foot; and commending it as well, she says, "All overlookers are far off; let us bathe our bodies, with the stream poured over them." She of Parrhasia[2] blushed; they all put off their clothes; she alone

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[1] Diana was so called from the Greek word *diktus,* "a net," which was used by her for the purposes of hunting.

[2] Calisto is so called from Parrhasia, a region of Arcadia, whose name was derived from Parrhasus, a son of Lycaon.

sought an excuse for delay. Her garment was removed as she hesitated, which being put off, her fault was exposed with her naked body. Cynthia said to her, in confusion, and endeavouring to conceal her stomach with her hands, "Begone afar hence! and pollute not the sacred springs;" and she ordered her to leave her train.

FABLES VI AND VII

Juno, being jealous that Calisto has attracted Jupiter, transforms her into a Bear. Her son, Arcas, not recognizing his mother in that shape, is about to kill her; but Jupiter removes them both to the skies, where they form the Constellations of the Great and the Little Bear. The raven, as a punishment for his garrulity, is changed from white to black.

The spouse of the great Thunderer had perceived this some time before, and had put off the severe punishment designed for her, to a proper time. There is now no reason for delay; and now the boy Arcas (that, too, was a grief to Juno) was born of the mistress of her husband. Wherefore, she turned her thoughts, full of resentment, and her eyes upon her, and said, "This thing, forsooth, alone was wanting, thou adulteress, that thou shouldst be pregnant, and that my injury should become notorious by thy labours, and that thereby the disgraceful conduct of my husband, Jupiter, should be openly declared. Thou shalt not go unpunished; for I will spoil that shape of thine, on which thou pridest thyself, and by which thou, mischievous one, dost charm my husband."

Thus she spoke; and seizing her straight in front by the hair, threw her on her face to the ground. She suppliantly stretched forth her arms; those arms began to grow rough with black hair, and her hands to be bent, and to increase to hooked claws, and to do the duty of feet, and the mouth, that was once admired by Jupiter, to become deformed with a wide opening; and lest her prayers, and words not heeded, should influence her feelings, the power of speech is taken from her; an angry and threatening voice, and full of terror,

is uttered from her hoarse throat. Still, her former understanding remains in her, even thus become a bear; and expressing her sorrows by her repeated groans, she lifts up her hands, such as they are, to heaven and to the stars, and she deems Jove ungrateful, though she cannot call him so. Ah! how often, not daring to rest in the lonely wood, did she wander about before her own house, and in the fields once her own. Ah! how often was she driven over the crags by the cry of the hounds; and, a huntress herself, she fled in alarm, through fear of the hunters! Often, seeing the wild beasts, did she lie concealed, forgetting what she was; and, a bear herself, dread the he-bears seen on the mountains, and was alarmed at the wolves, though her father was among them.

Behold! Arcas, the offspring of the daughter of Lycaon, ignorant of who is his parent, approaches her, thrice five birthdays being now nearly past; and while he is following the wild beasts, while he is choosing the proper woods, and is enclosing the Erymanthian forests[1] with his platted nets, he meets with his mother. She stood still, upon seeing Arcas, and was like one recognizing another. He drew back, and, in his ignorance, was alarmed at her keeping her eyes fixed upon him without ceasing; and, as she was desirous to approach still nearer, he would have pierced her breast with the wounding spear. Omnipotent Jove averted this, and removed both them and such wickedness; and placed them, carried through vacant space with a rapid wind, in the heavens, and made them neighbouring Constellations.

Juno swelled with rage after the mistress shone amid the stars, and descended on the sea to the hoary Tethys, and the aged Ocean, a regard for whom has often influenced the Gods; and said to them, enquiring the reason of her coming, "Do you enquire why I, the queen of the Gods, am come hither from the æthereal abodes? Another has possession of heaven in my stead. May I be deemed untruthful, if, when the night has made the world dark, you see not in the highest

[1] Erymanthus was a mountain of Arcadia, which was afterwards famous for the slaughter there, by Hercules, of the wild boar, which made it his haunt.

part of heaven stars but lately thus honoured to my affliction; there, where the last and most limited circle surrounds the extreme part of the axis of the world. Is there, then, any ground why one should hesitate to affront Juno, and dread my being offended, who only benefit them by my resentment? See what a great thing I have done! How vast is my power! I forbade her to be of human shape; she has been made a Goddess; 'tis thus that I inflict punishment on offenders; such is my mighty power! Let him obtain for her her former shape, and let him remove this form of a wild beast; as he formerly did for the Argive Phoronis. Why does he not marry her as well, divorcing Juno, and place her in my couch, and take Lycaon for his father-in-law? But if the wrong done to your injured foster-child affects you, drive the seven Triones away from your azure waters, and expel the stars received into heaven as the reward of adultery, that a concubine may not be received into your pure waves."

The Gods of the sea granted her request. The daughter of Saturn enters the liquid air in her graceful chariot, with her variegated peacocks; peacocks just as lately tinted, upon the killing of Argus, as thou, garrulous raven, hadst been suddenly transformed into a bird having black wings, whereas thou hadst been white before. For this bird was formerly of a silver hue, with snow-white feathers, so that he equalled the doves entirely without spot; nor would he give place to the geese that were to save the Capitol by their watchful voice, nor to the swan haunting the streams. His tongue was the cause of his disgrace; his chattering tongue being the cause, that the colour which was white is now the reverse of white.

There was no one more beauteous in all Hæmonia than Larissæan[1] Coronis. At least, she pleased thee, Delphian God, as long as she continued chaste, or was not the object of remark. But the bird of Phœbus found out her infidelity; and the inexorable informer winged his way to his master, that he might disclose the hidden offence. Him the prattling crow follows, with flapping wings, to make all enquiries of him. And having heard the occasion of his journey, he says, "Thou

[1] Larissa was the chief city of Thessaly.

art going on a fruitless errand; do not despise the presages of my voice."

FABLE VIII

A virgin, the favourite of Apollo, of the same name with Coronis, is changed into a crow, for a story which she tells Minerva, concerning the basket in which Ericthonius was inclosed.

"CONSIDER what I was, and what I am, and enquire into my deserts. Thou wilt find that my fidelity was my ruin. For once upon a time, Pallas had enclosed Ericthonius, an offspring born without a mother, in a basket made of Actæan twigs; and had given it to keep to the three virgins born of the two-shaped[1] Cecrops, and had given them this injunction, that they should not enquire into her secrets. I, being hidden among the light foliage, was watching from a thick elm what they were doing. Two of them, Pandrosos and Herse, observe their charge without any treachery; Aglauros alone calls her sisters cowards, and unties the knots with her hand; but within they behold a child, and a dragon extended by him. I told the Goddess what was done; for which such a return as this is made to me, that I am said to have been banished from the protection of Minerva, and am placed after the bird of the night. My punishment may warn birds not to incur dangers, by their chattering. But I consider that she courted me with no inclination of my own, nor asking for any such favours. This thou mayst ask of Pallas thyself; although she is angry, she will not, with all her anger, deny this. For Coroneus, one famous in the land of Phocis, (I mention what is well known) begot me; and so I was a virgin of royal birth, and was courted by rich suitors (so despise me not). My beauty was the cause of my misfortune; for while I was passing with slow steps along the sea shore, on the surface of the

[1] Cecrops is here so called from the fact of his having been born in Egypt, and having settled in Greece, and was thus to be reckoned both as an Egyptian, and in the number of the Greeks.

sand, as I was wont to do, the God of the Ocean beheld me, and was inflamed; and when he had consumed his time to no purpose, in entreating me with soft words, he prepared to use violence, and followed me. I fled, and I left the firm shore, and wearied myself in vain on the yielding sand. Then I invoked both Gods and men; but my voice did not reach any mortal. A virgin was moved for a virgin, and gave me assistance. I was extending my arms toward heaven; when those arms began to grow black with light feathers. I struggled to throw my garments from off my shoulders, but they were feathers, and had taken deep root in my skin. I tried to beat my naked breast with my hands, but I had now neither hands nor naked breast. I ran; and the sand did not retard my feet as before, and I was lifted up from the surface of the ground. After that, being lifted up, I was carried through the air, and was assigned, as a faultless companion, to Minerva. Yet what does this avail me, if Nyctimene, made a bird for a horrid crime, has succeeded me in my honour?"

FABLE IX

Nyctimene, having entertained a criminal passion for her father, Nycteus, the Gods, to punish her incest, transform her into an owl. Apollo pierces the breast of Coronis with an arrow, on the raven informing him of the infidelity of his mistress.

"Has not the thing, which is very well known throughout the whole of Lesbos, been heard of by thee, that Nyctimene defiled the bed of her father? She is a bird indeed; but being conscious of her crime, she avoids the human gaze and the light, conceals her shame in the darkness; and by all the birds she is expelled from the sky."

The raven says to him, saying such things, "May this, thy calling of me back, prove a mischief to thee, I pray; I despise the worthless omen." Nor does he drop his intended journey; and he tells his master, that he has seen Coronis lying down with a youth of Hæmonia. On hearing the crime of his mistress,

his laurel fell down; and at the same moment his usual looks, his plectrum,[1] and his colour, forsook the God. And as his mind was now burning with swelling rage, he took up his wonted arms, and levelled his bow bent from the extremities, and pierced, with an unerring shaft, that bosom, that had been so oft pressed to his own breast. Wounded, she uttered a groan, and, drawing the steel from out of the wound, she bathed her white limbs with purple blood; and she said, "I might justly, Phœbus, have been punished by thee, but still I might have first brought forth; now we two shall die in one." Thus far she spoke; and she poured forth her life, together with her blood. A deadly coldness took possession of her body deprived of life.

The lover, too late, alas! repents of his cruel vengeance, and blames himself that he listened to the bird, and that he was so infuriated. He hates the bird, through which he was forced to know of the crime and the cause of his sorrow; he hates, too, the string, the bow, and his hand; and together with his hand, those rash weapons, the arrows. He cherishes her fallen to the ground, and by late resources endeavours to conquer her destiny; and in vain he practises his physical arts.

When he found that these attempts were made in vain, and that the funereal pile was being prepared, and that her limbs were about to be burnt in the closing flames, then, in truth, he gave utterance to sighs fetched from the bottom of his heart (for it is not allowed the celestial features to be bathed with tears). No otherwise than, as when an axe, poised from the right ear of the butcher, dashes to pieces, with a clean stroke, the hollow temples of the sucking calf, while the dam looks on. Yet after Phœbus had poured the unavailing perfumes on her breast, when he had given the last embrace and had performed the due obsequies prematurely hastened, he did not suffer his own offspring to sink into the same ashes; but he snatched the child from the flames and from the womb of his mother, and carried him into the cave of the two-formed Chiron. And he forbade the raven, expecting for himself the

[1] This was a little rod, or staff, with which the player used to strike the strings of the lyre, or cithara, on which he was playing.

reward of his tongue that told no untruth, to perch any longer among the white birds.

FABLE X

Ocyrrhöe, the daughter of the Centaur Chiron, attempting to predict future events, tells her father the fate of the child Æsculapius, on which the Gods transform her into a mare.

In the meantime the half-beast Chiron was proud of a pupil of Divine origin, and rejoiced in the honour annexed to the responsibility. Behold! the daughter of the Centaur comes, having her shoulders covered with her yellow hair; whom once the nymph Chariclo,[1] having borne her on the banks of a rapid stream, called Ocyrrhoë. She was not contented to earn her father's arts only; but she sang the secrets of the Fates. Therefore, when she had conceived in her mind the prophetic transports, and grew warm with the God, whom she held confined within her breast, she beheld the infant, and she said, "Grow on, child, the giver of health to the whole world; the bodies of mortals shall often owe their own existence to thee. To thee will it be allowed to restore life when taken away; and daring to do that once against the will of the Gods, thou wilt be hindered by the bolts of thy grandsire from being able any more to grant that boon. And from a God thou shalt become a lifeless carcase; and a God again, who lately wast a carcase; and twice shalt thou renew thy destiny. Thou likewise, dear father, now immortal, and produced at thy nativity, on the condition of enduring for ever, wilt then wish that thou couldst die, when thou shalt be tormented on receiving the blood of a baneful serpent[2] in thy wounded limbs; and the Gods shall make thee from an immortal being,

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[1] She was the daughter of Apollo, or of Oceanus, but is supposed not to have been the same person that is mentioned by Apollodorus as the mother of the prophet Tiresias.

[2] This happened when one of the arrows of Hercules, dipped in the poison of the Lernæan Hydra, pierced the foot of Chiron while he was examining it.

subject to death, and the three Goddesses[1] shall cut thy threads."

Something still remained in addition to what she had said. She heaved a sigh from the bottom of her breast, and the tears bursting forth, trickled down her cheeks, and thus she said: "The Fates prevent me, and I am forbidden to say any more, and the use of my voice is precluded. My arts, which have brought the wrath of a Divinity upon me, were not of so much value; I wish that I had not been acquainted with the future. Now the human shape seems to be withdrawing from me; now grass pleases me for my food; now I have a desire to range over the extended plains; I am turned into a mare, and into a shape kindred to that of my father. But yet, why entirely? For my father partakes of both forms."

As she was uttering such words as these, the last part of her complaint was but little understood; and her words were confused. And presently neither were they words indeed nor did it appear to be the voice of a mare, but of one imitating a mare. And in a little time she uttered perfect neighing, and stretched her arms upon the grass. Then did her fingers grow together, and a smooth hoof united five nails in one continued piece of horn. The length of her face and of her neck increased; the greatest part of her long hair became a tail. And as the hairs lay scattered about her neck, they were transformed into a mane lying upon the right side; at once both her voice and her shape were changed. And this wondrous change gave her the new name of Enippe.

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[1] Namely, Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, the "Parcæ," or "Destinies."

FABLE XI

Mercury, having stolen the oxen of Apollo, and Battus having perceived the theft, he engages him, by a present, to keep the matter secret. Mistrusting, however, his fidelity, he assumes another shape, and tempting him with presents, he succeeds in corrupting him. To punish his treachery, the God changes him into a touchstone.

The Philyrean[1] hero wept, and in vain, God of Delphi, implored thy assistance; but neither couldst thou reverse the orders of great Jupiter, nor, if thou couldst have reversed them, wast thou then present; for then thou wast dwelling in Elis and the Messenian fields. This was the time when a shepherd's skin garment was covering thee, and a stick cut out of the wood was the burden of thy left hand, and of the other, a pipe unequal with its seven reeds. And while love is thy concern, while thy pipe is soothing thee, some cows are said to have strayed unobserved into the plains of Pylos. The son of Maia, the daughter of Atlas, observes them, and with his usual skill hides them, driven off, in the woods. Nobody but an old man, well-known in that country, had noticed the theft; all the neighbourhood called him Battus. He was keeping the forests and the grassy pastures, and the set of fine-bred mares of the rich Neleus.[2]

Mercury was afraid of him, and took him aside with a gentle hand, and said to him, "Come, stranger, whoever thou art, if, perchance, anyone should ask after these herds, deny that thou hast seen them; and, lest no requital be paid thee for so doing, take a handsome cow as thy reward;" and thereupon he gave him one. On receiving it, the stranger returned this answer: "Thou mayst go in safety. May that stone first make mention of thy theft;" and he pointed to a stone. The son of Jupiter feigned to go away. But soon he returned, and changing his form, together with his voice, he said, "Country-

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[1] Chiron was the son of Philyra, by Saturn.

[2] The king of Pylos, and the father of Nestor.

man, if thou hast seen any cows pass along this way, give me thy help, and break silence about the theft; a female, coupled together with its bull shall be presented thee as a reward." But the old man, after his reward was thus doubled, said, "They will be beneath those hills;" and beneath those hills they really were. The son of Atlas laughed and said, "Dost thou, treacherous man, betray me to my own self? Dost betray me to myself?" and then he turned his perjured breast into a hard stone, which even now is called the "Touchstone;"[1] and this old disgrace is attached to the stone that really deserves it not.

FABLE XII

Mercury, falling in love with Herse, the daughter of Cecrops, endeavours to engage Aglauros in his interest, and by her means, to obtain access to her sister. She refuses to assist him, unless he promises to present her with a large sum of money.

Hence, the bearer of the caduceus raised himself upon equal wings; and as he flew, he looked down upon the fields of Munychia,[2] and the land pleasing to Minerva, and the groves of the well-planted Lycæus. On that day, by chance, the chaste virgins were, in their purity, carrying the sacred offerings in baskets crowned with flowers, upon their heads to the joyful citadel of Pallas. The winged Gods beholds them returning thence; and he does not shape his course directly forward, but wheels round in the same circle. As that bird swiftest in speed, the kite, on espying the entrails, while he is afraid, and the priests stand in numbers around the sacrifice, wings his flight in circles, and yet ventures not to go far away, and greedily hovers around the object of his hopes with waving wings, so does the active Cyllenian God bend his course over the Actæan towers, and circles round in the same air. As

[1] "Index" (Touchstone) was also a name of infamy, corresponding with our term "spy."

[2] A promontory and harbour of Attica, so called from Munychius, who there built a temple in honour of Diana.

much as Lucifer shines more brightly than the other stars, and as much as the golden Phœbe shines more brightly than thee, O Lucifer, so much superior was Herse, as she went, to all the other virgins, and was the ornament of the solemnity and of her companions. The son of Jupiter was astonished at her beauty; and as he hung in the air, he burned no otherwise than as when the Balearic [1] sling throws forth the plummet of lead; it flies and becomes red hot in its course, and finds beneath the clouds the fires which it had not before.

He alters his course, and, having left heaven, goes a different way; nor does he disguise himself; so great is his confidence in his beauty. This, though it is every way complete, still he improves by care, and smooths his hair and adjusts his mantle, that it may hang properly, so that the fringe and all the gold may be seen; and minds that his long smooth wand, with which he induces and drives away sleep, is in his right hand, and that his wings shine upon his beauteous feet.

A private part of the house had three bed-chambers, adorned with ivory and with tortoiseshell, of which thou, Pandrosos, hadst the right-hand one, Aglauros the left-hand, and Herse had the one in the middle. She that occupied the left-hand one was the first to remark Mercury approaching, and she ventured to ask the name of the God, and the occasion of his coming. To her thus answered the grandson of Atlas and of Pleione: "I am he who carries the commands of my father through the air. Jupiter himself is my father. Nor will I invent pretences; do thou only be willing to be attached to thy sister, and to be called the aunt of my offspring. Herse is the cause of my coming; I pray thee to favour one in love." Aglauros looks upon him with the same eyes with which she had lately looked upon the hidden mysteries of the yellow-haired Minerva, and demands for her agency gold of great weight; and, in the mean time, obliges him to go out of the house. The warlike Goddess turned upon her the orbs of her stern eyes, and drew a sigh from the bottom of her heart, with

[1] The Baleares were the islands of Majorca, Minorca, and Iviza, in the Mediterranean, near the coast of Spain. The natives of these islands were famous for their skill in the use of the sling.

so great a motion, that she heaved both her breast and the Ægis placed before her valiant breast. It occurred to her that she had laid open her secrets with a profane hand, at the time when she held progeny created for the God who inhabits Lemnos,[1] without a mother, and contrary to the assigned laws; and that she could now be agreeable both to the God and to the sister of Aglauros, and that she would be enriched by taking the gold, which she, in her avarice, had demanded. Forthwith she repairs to the abode of Envy, hideous with black gore. Her abode is concealed in the lowest recesses of a cave, wanting sun, and not pervious to any wind, dismal and filled with benumbing cold; and which is ever without fire, and ever abounding with darkness.

FABLE XIII

Pallas commands Envy to make Aglauros jealous of her sister Herse. Envy obeys the request of the Goddess; and Aglauros, stung with that passion, continues obstinate in opposing Mercury's passage to her sister's apartment, for which the God changes her into a statue.

When the female warrior, to be dreaded in battle, came hither, she stood before the abode, (for she did not consider it lawful to go under the roof,) and she struck the door-posts with the end of the spear. The doors, being shaken, flew open; she sees Envy within, eating the flesh of vipers, the nutriment of her own bad propensities; and when she sees her, she turns away her eyes. But the other rises sluggishly from the ground, and leaves the bodies of the serpents half devoured, and stalks along with sullen pace. And when she sees the Goddess graced with beauty and with splendid arms, she groans and fetches a deep sigh at her appearance. A paleness rests on her face, and leanness in all her body; she never looks

[1] Being precipitated from heaven for his deformity, Vulcan fell upon the Isle of Lemnos, in the Ægean Sea, where he exercised the craft of a blacksmith, according to the mythologists. The birth of Erichthonius, by the aid of Minerva, is here referred to.

direct on you; her teeth are black with rust; her breast is green with gall; her tongue is dripping with venom. Smiles there are none, except such as the sight of grief has excited. Nor does she enjoy sleep, being kept awake with watchful cares; but sees with sorrow the successes of men, and pines away at seeing them. She both torments and is tormented at the same moment, and is ever her own punishment. Yet, though Tritonia [1] hated her, she spoke to her briefly in such words as these: "Infect one of the daughters of Cecrops with thy poison; there is occasion so to do; Aglauros is she."

Saying no more, she departed, and spurned the ground with her spear impressed on it. She, beholding the Goddess as she departed, with a look askance, uttered a few murmurs, and grieved at the success of Minerva; and took her staff, which wreaths of thorns entirely surrounded; and veiled in black clouds, wherever she goes she tramples down the blooming fields, and burns up the grass, and crops the tops of the flowers. With her breath, too, she pollutes both nations and cities, and houses; and at last she descries the Tritonian [2] citadel, flourishing in arts and riches, and cheerful peace. Hardly does she restrain her tears, because she sees nothing to weep at. But after she has entered the chamber of the daughter of Cecrops, she executes her orders; and touches her breast with her hand stained with rust, and fills her heart with jagged thorns. She breathes into her as well the noxious venom, and spreads the poison black as pitch throughout her bones, and lodges it in the midst of her lungs.

And that these causes of mischief may not wander through too wide a space, she places her sister before her eyes, and the fortunate marriage of that sister, and the God under his beauteous appearance, and aggravates each particular. By this the daughter of Cecrops being irritated, is gnawed by a secret grief, and groans, tormented by night, tormented by day, and wastes away, in extreme wretchedness, with a slow

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[1] Minerva, so called either from the Cretan word *trito,* signifying "a head," as she sprang from the head of Jupiter; or from Trito, a lake of Libya, near which she was said to have been born.

[2] Athens, namely, which was sacred to Minerva.

consumption, as ice smitten upon by a sun often clouded. She burns at the good fortune of the happy Herse, no otherwise than as when fire is placed beneath thorny reeds, which do not send forth flames, and burn with a gentle heat. Often does she wish to die, that she may not be a witness to any such thing; often, to tell the matters, as criminal, to her severe father. At last, she sat herself down in the front of the threshold, in order to exclude the God when he came; to whom, as he proffered blandishments and entreaties, and words of extreme kindness, she said, "Cease all this; I shall not remove myself hence, until thou art repulsed." "Let us stand to that agreement," says the active Cyllenian God; and he opens the carved door with his wand. But in her, as she endeavours to rise, the parts which we bend in sitting cannot be moved, through their numbing weight. She, indeed, struggles to raise herself, with her body, upright; but the joints of her knees are stiff, and a chill runs through her nails, and her veins are pallid, through the loss of blood.

And as the disease of an incurable cancer is wont to spread in all directions, and to add the uninjured parts to the tainted; so, by degrees, did a deadly chill enter her breast, and stop the passages of life, and her respiration. She did not endeavour to speak; but if she had endeavoured, she had no passage for her voice. Stone had now possession of her neck; her face was grown hard, and she sat, a bloodless statue. Nor was the stone white; her mind had stained it.

FABLE XIV

Jupiter assumes the shape of a Bull, and carrying off Europa, swims with her on his back to the isle of Crete.

When the grandson of Atlas had inflicted this punishment upon her words and her profane disposition, he left the lands named after Pallas, and entered the skies with his waving wings. His father calls him on one side; and, not owning the cause of his love, he says, "My son, the trusty minister of my commands, banish delay, and swiftly descend with thy

usual speed, and repair to the region which looks towards thy Constellation mother on the left side, (the natives call it Sidon) and drive toward the sea-shore, the herd belonging to the king, which thou seest feeding afar upon the grass of the mountain."

Thus he spoke; and already were the bullocks, driven from the mountain, making for the shore named, where the daughter of the great king, attended by Tyrian virgins, was wont to amuse herself. Majesty and love but ill accord, nor can they continue in the same abode. The father and the ruler of the Gods, whose right hand is armed with the three-forked flames; who shakes the world with his nod, laying aside the dignity of empire, assumes the appearance of a bull; and mixing with the oxen, he lows, and, in all his beauty, walks about upon the shooting grass. For his colour is that of snow, which neither the soles of hard feet have trodden upon, nor the watery South wind melted. His neck swells with muscles; dewlaps hang from between his shoulders. His horns are small indeed, and such as you might maintain were made with the hand, and more transparent than a bright gem. There is nothing threatening in his forehead; nor is his eye formidable; his countenance expresses peace.

The daughter of Agenor is surprised that he is so beautiful, and that he threatens no attack; but although so gentle, she is at first afraid to touch him. By and by she approaches him, and holds out flowers to his white mouth. The lover rejoices, and till his hoped-for pleasure comes, he gives kisses to her hands; scarcely, oh, scarcely, does he defer the rest. And now he plays with her, and skips upon the green grass; and now he lays his snow-white side upon the yellow sand. And, her fear now removed by degrees, at one moment he gives his breast to be patted by the hand of the virgin; at another, his horns to be wreathed with new-made garlands. The virgin of royal birth even ventured to sit down upon the back of the bull, not knowing upon whom she was pressing. Then the God, by degrees moving from the land, and from the dry shore, places the fictitious hoofs of his feet in the waves near the brink. Then he goes still further, and carries his prize over the expanse of the midst of the ocean. She is affrighted, and,

borne off, looks back on the shore she has left; and with her right hand she grasps his horn, while the other is placed on his back; her waving garments are ruffled by the breeze.

BOOK THE THIRD

FABLE I

Jupiter, having carried away Europa, her father, Agenor, commands his son Cadmus to go immediately in search of her, and either to bring back his sister with him, or never to return to Phœnicia. Cadmus, wearied with his toils and fruitless enquiries, goes to consult the oracle at Delphi, which bids him observe the spot where he should see a cow lie down, and build a city there, and give the name of Bœotia to the country.

And now the God, having laid aside the shape of the deceiving Bull, had discovered himself, and reached the Dictæan land; when her father, ignorant of her fate, commands Cadmus to seek her thus ravished, and adds exile as a punishment, if he does not find her; being both affectionate and unnatural in the self-same act. The son of Agenor, having wandered over the whole world, as an exile flies from his country and the wrath of his father, for who is there that can discover the intrigues of Jupiter? A suppliant, he consults the oracle of Phœbus, and enquires in what land he must dwell. "A heifer," Phœbus says, "will meet thee in the lonely fields, one that has never borne the yoke, and free from the crooked plough. Under her guidance, go on thy way; and where she shall lie down on the grass, there cause a city to be built, and call it the Bœotian[1] city."

Scarcely had Cadmus well got down from the Castalian cave,[2] when he saw a heifer, without a keeper, slowly going

[1] He implies here that Bœotia received its name from the Greek word *bous*, "an ox" or "cow."

[2] Castalius was a fountain at the foot of Mount Parnassus, and in the vicinity of Delphi. It was sacred to the Muses.

along, bearing no mark of servitude upon her neck. He follows, and pursues her steps with leisurely pace, and silently adores Phœbus, the adviser of his way. And now he had passed the fords of the Cephisus, and the fields of Panope, when the cow stood still, and raising her forehead, expansive with lofty horns, towards heaven, she made the air reverberate with her lowings. And so, looking back on her companions that followed behind, she lay down, and reposed her side upon the tender grass. Cadmus returned thanks, and imprinted kisses upon the stranger land, and saluted the unknown mountains and fields. He was now going to offer sacrifice to Jupiter, and commanded his servants to go and fetch some water for the libation from the running springs. An ancient grove was standing there, as yet profaned by no axe. There was a cavern in the middle of it, thick covered with twigs and osiers, forming a low arch by the junction of the rocks; abounding with plenty of water. Hid in this cavern, there was a dragon sacred to Mars, adorned with crests and a golden colour. His eyes sparkle with fire, and all his body is puffed out with poison; three tongues, too, are brandished, and his teeth stand in a triple row.

FABLE II

The companions of Cadmus, fetching water from the fountain of Mars, are devoured by the Dragon that guards it. Cadmus, on discovering their destruction, slays the monster, and, by the advice of Minerva, sows the teeth, which immediately produce a crop of armed men. They forthwith quarrel among themselves, and kill each other, with the exception of five who assist Cadmus in building the city of Thebes.

After the men who came from the Tyrian nation had touched this grove with ill-fated steps, and the urn let down into the water made a splash; the azure dragon stretched forth his head from the deep cave, and uttered dreadful hissings. The urns dropped from their hands; and the blood left their bodies, and a sudden trembling seized their astonished

limbs. He wreathes his scaly orbs in rolling spires, and with a spring becomes twisted into mighty folds; and uprearing himself from below the middle into the light air, he looks down upon all the grove, and is of as large size, as, if you were to look on him entire, the serpent which separates the two Bears.

There is no delay; he seizes the Phœnicians, (whether they are resorting to their arms or to flight, or whether fear itself is preventing either step); some he kills with his sting, some with his long folds, some breathed upon by the venom of his baneful poison.

The sun, now at its height, had made the shadows but small: the son of Agenor wonders what has detained his companions, and goes to seek his men. His garment was a skin torn from a lion; his weapon was a lance with shining steel, and a javelin; and a courage superior to any weapon. When he entered the grove, and beheld the lifeless bodies, and the victorious enemy of immense size upon them, licking the horrid wounds with bloodstained tongue, he said, "Either I will be the avenger of your death, bodies of my faithful companions, or I will be a sharer in it." Thus he said; and with his right hand he raised a huge stone, and hurled the vast weight with a tremendous effort. And although high walls with lofty towers would have been shaken with the shock of it, yet the dragon remained without a wound; and, being defended by his scales as though with a coat of mail, and the hardness of his black hide, he repelled the mighty stroke with his skin. But he did not overcome the javelin as well with the same hardness; which stood fast, fixed in the middle joint of his yielding spine, and sank with the entire point of steel into his entrails. Fierce with pain, he turned his head towards his back, and beheld his wounds, and bit the javelin fixed there. And after he had twisted it on every side with all his might, with difficulty he wrenched it from his back; yet the steel stuck fast in his bones. But then, when this newly inflicted wound has increased his wonted fury, his throat swelled with gorged veins, and white foam flowed around his pestilential jaws. The Earth, too, scraped with his scales, sounds again, and the livid steam that issues from his infernal mouth, in-

fects the tainted air. One while he enrolled in spires making enormous rings; sometimes he unfolds himself straighter than a long beam. Now with a vast impulse, like a torrent swelled with rain, he is borne along, and bears down the obstructing forests with his breast. The son of Agenor gives way a little; and by the spoil of the lion he sustains the shock, and with his lance extended before him, pushes back his mouth, as it advances. The dragon rages, and vainly inflicts wounds on the hard steel, and fixes his teeth upon the point. And now the blood began to flow from his poisonous palate, and had dyed the green grass with its spray. But the wound was slight; because he recoiled from the stroke, and drew back his wounded throat, and by shrinking prevented the blow from sinking deep, and did not suffer it to go very far. At length, the son of Agenor, still pursuing, pressed the spear lodged in his throat, until an oak stood in his way as he retreated, and his neck was pierced, together with the trunk. The tree was bent with the weight of the serpent, and groaned at having its trunk lashed with the extremity of its tail.

While the conqueror was surveying the vast size of his vanquished enemy, a voice was suddenly heard (nor was it easy to understand whence it was, but heard it was). "Why, son of Agenor, art thou thus contemplating the dragon slain by thee? Even thou thyself shalt be seen in the form of a dragon."[1] He, for a long time in alarm, lost his colour together with his presence of mind, and his hair stood on end with a chill of terror. Lo! Pallas, the favourer of the hero, descending through the upper region of the air, comes to him, and bids him sow the dragon's teeth under the earth turned up, as the seeds of a future people. He obeyed; and when he had opened a furrow with the pressed plough, he scattered the teeth on the ground as ordered, the seed of a race of men. Afterwards ('tis beyond belief) the turf began to move, and first appeared a point of a spear out of the furrows, next the

[1] This came to pass when, having been expelled from his dominions by Zethus and Amphion, he retired to Illyria, and was there transformed into a serpent, a fate which was shared by his wife Hermione.

coverings of heads nodding with painted cones;[1] then the shoulders and the breast, and the arms laden with weapons start up, and a crop of men armed with shields grows apace. So, when the curtains[2] are drawn in the joyful theatres, figures are wont to rise, and first to show their countenances; by degrees the rest; and being drawn out in a gradual continuation, the whole appear, and place their feet on the lowest edge of the stage. Alarmed with this new enemy, Cadmus is preparing to take arms, when one of the people that the earth had produced cries out, "Do not take up arms, nor engage thyself in civil war." And then, engaged hand to hand, he strikes one of his earth-born brothers with the cruel sword, while he himself falls by a dart sent from a distance. He, also, who had put him to death, lives no longer than the other, and breathes forth the air which he has so lately received. In a similar manner, too, the whole troop becomes maddened, and the brothers so newly sprung up, fall in fight with each other, by mutual wounds. And now the youths that had the space of so short an existence allotted them, beat with throbbing breasts their blood-stained mother, five only remaining, of whom Echion was one. He, by the advice of Tritonia, threw his arms upon the ground, and both asked and gave the assurance of brotherly concord.

The Sidonian stranger had these as associates in his task, when he built the city that was ordered by the oracle of Phœbus.

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[1] The "conus" was the conical part of the helmet into which the crest of variegated feathers was inserted.

[2] The curtain of the Roman theatre was *depressed* when the play began, and drawn up when it was over.

FABLE III

Actæon, the grandson of Cadmus, fatigued with hunting and excessive heat, inadvertently wanders to the cool valley of Gargaphie, the usual retreat of Diana, when tired with the same exercise. There, to his misfortune, he surprises the Goddess and her Nymphs while bathing, for which she transforms him into a stag, and his own hounds tear him to pieces.

And now Thebes was standing; now, Cadmus, thou mightst seem happy in thy exile. Both Mars and Venus[1] had become thy father-in-law and mother-in-law; add to this, issue by a wife so illustrious, so many sons and daughters, and grandchildren, dear pledges of love; these, too, now of a youthful age. But, forsooth, the last day of life must always be awaited by man, and no one ought to be pronounced happy before his death,[2] and his last obsequies. Thy grandson, Cadmus, was the first occasion of sorrow to thee, among so much prosperity, the horns, too, not his own, placed upon his forehead, and you, O dogs, glutted with the blood of your master. But, if you diligently inquire into his case, you will find the fault of an accident, and not criminality in him; for what criminality did mistake embrace?

There was a mountain stained with the blood of various wild beasts; and now the day had contracted the meridian shadow of things, and the sun was equally distant from each extremity of the heavens; when the Hyantian youth[3] thus addressed the partakers of his toils, as they wandered along the lonely haunts of the wild beasts, with gentle accent; "Our nets are moistened, my friends, and our spears too, with the blood of wild beasts; and the day has yielded sufficient sport; when the next morn, borne upon her rosy chariot, shall bring

[1] The wife of Cadmus was Hermione, or Harmonia, the daughter of Mars and Venus.

[2] This was the famous remark of Solon to Crœsus.

[3] Actæon is thus called, as being a Bœotian. The Hyantes were the ancient or aboriginal inhabitants of Bœotia.

back the light, let us seek again our proposed task. Now Phœbus is at the same distance from both lands, the Eastern and the Western, and is cleaving the fields with his heat. Cease your present toils, and take away the knotted nets." The men execute his orders, and cease their labours. There was a valley, thick set with pitch-trees and the sharp-pointed cypress; by name Gargaphie, sacred to the active Diana. In the extreme recess of this, there was a grotto in a grove, formed by no art; nature, by her ingenuity, had counterfeited art; for she had formed a natural arch, in the native pumice and the light sand-stones. A limpid fountain ran murmuring on the right hand with its little stream, having its spreading channels edged with a border of grass. Here, when wearied with hunting, the Goddess of the woods was wont to bathe her virgin limbs in the clear water.

After she had entered there, she handed to one of the Nymphs, her armour-bearer, her javelin, her quiver, and her unstrung bow. Another Nymph put her arms under her mantle, when taken off; two removed the sandals from her feet. But Crocale, the daughter of Ismenus, more skilled than they, gathered her hair, which lay scattered over her neck, into a knot, although she herself was with her hair loose. Nephele, and Hyale, and Rhanis, fetch water, Psecas and Phyale do the same, and pour it from their large urns. And while the Titanian Goddess was there bathing in the wonted stream, behold! the grandson of Cadmus, having deferred the remainder of his sport till next day, came into the grove, wandering through the unknown wood, with uncertain steps; thus did his fate direct him.

Soon as he entered the grotto, dropping with its springs, the Nymphs, naked as they were, on seeing a man, smote their breasts, and filled all the woods with sudden shrieks, and gathering round Diana, covered her with their bodies. Yet the Goddess herself was higher than they, and was taller than them all by the neck. The colour that is wont to be in clouds, tinted by the rays of the sun when opposite, or that of the ruddy morning, was on the features of Diana, when seen without her garments. She, although surrounded with the crowd of her attendants, stood sideways, and turned her face

back; and now did she wish that she had her arrows at hand; and so she took up water, which she did have at hand, and threw it over the face of the man, and sprinkling his hair with the avenging stream, she added these words, the presages of his future woe: "Now thou mayst tell, if tell thou canst, how that I was seen by thee without my garments." Threatening no more, she places on his sprinkled head the horns of a lively stag; she adds length to his neck, and sharpens the tops of his ears; and she changes his hands into feet, and his arms into long legs, and covers his body with a spotted coat of hair; fear, too, is added. The Autonoëian[1] hero took to flight, and wondered that he was so swift in his speed; but when he beheld his own horns in the wonted stream, he was about to say, "Ah, wretched me!" when no voice followed. He groaned; that was all his voice, and his tears trickled down a face not his own, but that of a stag. His former understanding alone remained. What should he do? Should he return home, and to the royal abode? or should he lie hid in the woods? Fear hinders the one step, shame the other. While he was hesitating, the dogs espied him, and first Melampus, and the good-nosed Ichnobates gave the signal, in full cry. Ichnobates was a Gnossian dog; Melampus was of Spartan breed. Then the rest rush on, swifter than the rapid winds; Pamphagus, and Dorcæus, and Oribasus, all Arcadian dogs; and able Nebrophonus, and with Lælaps, fierce Theron, and Pterelas, excelling in speed, Agre in her scent, and Hylæus, lately wounded by a fierce boar, and Nape, begotten by a wolf, and Pœmenis, that had tended cattle, and Harpyia, followed by her two whelps, and the Sicyonian Ladon, having a slender girth; Dromas, too, and Canace, Sticte and Tigris, and Alce, and Leucon, with snow-white hair, and Asbolus, with black, and the able-bodied Lacon, and Aëllo, good at running, and Thoüs, and the swift Lycisca, with her Cyprian brother, Harpalus, too, having his black face marked with white down the middle, and Melaneus, and Lachne, with a wire-haired body, and Labros, and Agriodos, bred of a

[1] Autonoë was the daughter of Cadmus and Hermione, or Harmonia, and the wife of Aristæus, by whom she was the mother of Actæon.

Dictæan sire, but of a Laconian dam, and Hylactor, with his shrill note; and others which it were tedious to recount.[1]

This pack, in eagerness for their prey, are borne over rocks and cliffs, and crags difficult of approach, where the path is steep, and where there is no road. He flies along the routes by which he has so often pursued; alas! he is now flying from his own servants. Fain would he have cried, "I am Actæon, recognize your own master." Words are wanting to his wishes; the air resounds with their barking. Melanchætes was the first to make a wound on his back, Theridamas the next; Oresitrophus fastened upon his shoulder. These had gone out later, but their course was shortened by a near cut through the hill. While they hold their master, the rest of the pack come up, and fasten their teeth in his body. Now room is wanting for more wounds. He groans, and utters a noise, though not that of a man, still, such as a stag cannot make; and he fills the well-known mountains with dismal moans, and suppliant on his bended knees, and like one in entreaty, he turns round his silent looks as though they were his arms.

But his companions, in their ignorance, urge on the eager pack with their usual cries, and seek Actæon with their eyes; and cry out "Actæon" aloud, as though he were absent. At his name he turns his head, as they complain that he is not there, and in his indolence, is not enjoying a sight of the sport afforded them. He wished, indeed, he had been away, but there he was; and he wished to see, not to feel as well, the cruel feats of his own dogs. They gather round him on all sides, and burying their jaws in his body, tear their master in pieces under the form of an imaginary stag. And the rage of the quiver-bearing Diana is said not to have been satiated, until his life was ended by many a wound.

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[1] There were fifty in all in the pack. These names mean "Blackfoot," "Trailer," "Glutton," "Quicksight," etc.

FABLE IV

Juno, incensed against Semele for her intrigue with Jupiter, takes the form of Beroë, the more easily to ensure her revenge. Having first infused in Semele suspicions of her lover, she then recommends her to adopt a certain method of proving his constancy. Semele, thus deceived, obtains a reluctant promise from Jupiter, to make his next visit to her in the splendour and majesty in which he usually approached his wife.

They speak in various ways of this matter. To some, the Goddess seems more severe than is proper; others praise her, and call her deserving of her state of strict virginity: both sides find their reasons. The wife of Jupiter alone does not so much declare whether she blames or whether she approves, as she rejoices at the calamity of a family sprung from Agenor, and transfers the hatred that she had conceived from the Tyrian mistress to the partners of her race. Lo! a fresh occasion is now added to the former one; and she grieves that Semele is pregnant from the seed of great Jupiter. She then lets loose her tongue to abuse.

"And what good have I done by railing so often?" said she. "She herself must be attacked by me. If I am properly called the supreme Juno, I will destroy her; if it becomes me to hold the sparkling sceptre in my right hand; if I am the queen, and both sister and wife of Jupiter. The sister I am, no doubt. But I suppose she is content with a stolen embrace, and the injury to my bed is but trifling. She is now pregnant; that alone was wanting; and she bears the evidence of his crime in her swelling womb, and wishes to be made a mother by Jupiter, a thing which hardly fell to my lot alone. So great is her confidence in her beauty. I will take care he shall deceive her; and may I be no daughter of Saturn, if she does not descend to the Stygian waves, sunk there by her own dear Jupiter."

Upon this she rises from her throne, and, hidden in a cloud of fiery hue, she approaches the threshold of Semele. Nor

did she remove the clouds before she counterfeited an old woman, and planted grey hair on her temples; and furrowed her skin with wrinkles, and moved her bending limbs with palsied step, and made her voice that of an old woman. She became Beroë herself, the Epidaurian nurse of Semele. When therefore, upon engaging in discourse with her, and after long talking, they came to the name of Jupiter, she sighed, and said, "I only wish it may be Jupiter; yet I am apt to fear every thing. Many a one under the name of a God has invaded a chaste bed. Nor yet is it enough that he is Jupiter; let him, if, indeed, he is the real one, give some pledge of his affection; and beg of him to bestow his caresses on thee, just in the greatness and form in which he is received by the stately Juno; and let him first assume his ensigns of royalty." With such words did Juno tutor the unsuspecting daughter of Cadmus. She requested of Jupiter a favour, without naming it. To her the God said, "Make thy choice, thou shalt suffer no denial; and that thou mayst believe it the more, let the majesty of the Stygian stream bear witness. He is the dread and the God of the Gods."

Overjoyed at what was her misfortune, and too easily prevailing, as now about to perish by the complaisance of her lover, Semele said, "Present thyself to me, just such as the daughter of Saturn is wont to embrace thee, when ye honour the ties of Venus." The God wished to shut her mouth as she spoke, but the hasty words had now escaped into air. He groaned; for neither was it now possible for her not to have wished, nor for him not to have sworn. Therefore, in extreme sadness, he mounted the lofty skies, and with his nod drew along the attendant clouds; to which he added showers and lightnings mingled with winds, and thunders, and the inevitable thunderbolt.

FABLE V

Semele is visited by Jupiter, according to the promise she had obliged him to make; but, being unable to support the effulgence of his lightning, she is burnt to ashes in his presence. Bacchus, with whom she is pregnant, is preserved; and Tiresias decided the dispute between Jupiter and Juno, concerning the sexes.

And yet, as much as possible, he tries to mitigate his powers. Nor is he now armed with those flames with which he had overthrown the hundred-handed Typhœus; in those, there is too much fury. There is another thunder, less baneful, to which the right hand of the Cyclops gave less ferocity and flames, and less anger. The Gods above call this second-rate thunder; it he assumes, and he enters the house of Agenor. Her mortal body could not endure the æthereal shock, and she was burned amid her nuptial presents. The infant, as yet unformed, is taken out of the womb of his mother, and prematurely (if we believe it) is inserted in the thigh of the father, and completes the time that he should have spent in the womb. His aunt, Ino, nurses him privately in his early cradle. After that, the Nyseian Nymphs[1] conceal him, entrusted to them, in their caves, and give him the nourishment of milk.

And while these things are transacted on earth by the law of destiny, and the cradle of Bacchus, twice born, is secured; they tell that Jupiter, by chance, well drenched with nectar, laid aside all weighty cares, and engaged in some free jokes with Juno, in her idle moments, and said: "Decidedly the pleasure of you, females, is greater than that which falls to the lot of us males." She denied it. It was agreed between them, to ask what was the opinion of the experienced

[1] Nysa was the name of a city and mountain of Arabia, or India. The tradition was, that there the Nyseian Nymphs, whose names were Cysseis, Nysa, Erato, Eryphia, Bromia, and Polyhymnia, brought up Bacchus. From the name "Nysa," Bacchus received, in part, his Greek name "Dionysus."

Tiresias. To him both pleasures were well known. For he had separated with a blow of his staff two bodies of large serpents, as they were coupling in a green wood; and (passing strange) become a woman from a man, he had spent seven autumns. In the eighth, he again saw the same serpents, and said, "If the power of a stroke given you is so great as to change the condition of the giver into the opposite one, I will now strike you again." Having struck the same snakes, his former sex returned, and his original shape came again. He, therefore, being chosen as umpire in this sportive contest, confirmed the words of Jove. The daughter of Saturn is said to have grieved more than was fit, and not in proportion to the subject; and she condemned the eyes of the umpire to eternal darkness.

But the omnipotent father (for it is not allowed any God to cancel the acts of another Deity) gave him the knowledge of things to come, in recompense for his loss of sight, and alleviated his punishment by this honour.

FABLE VI

Echo, having often amused Juno with her stories, to give time to Jupiter's mistresses to make their escape, the Goddess, at last, punishes her for the deception. She is slighted and despised by Narcissus, with whom she falls in love.

He, much celebrated by fame throughout the cities of Aonia,[1] gave unerring answers to the people consulting him. The azure Liriope[2] was the first to make essay and experiment of his infallible voice; whom once Cephisus encircled in his winding stream, and offered violence to, when enclosed by his waters. The most beauteous Nymph produced an infant

[1] Aonia was a mountainous district of Bœotia, so called from Aon, the son of Neptune, who reigned there. The name is often used to signify the whole of Bœotia.

[2] The daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, and the mother of the youth Narcissus, by the river Cephisus. Her name is derived from the Greek *leirion*, "a lily."

from her teeming womb, which even then might have been beloved, and she called him Narcissus.[1] Being consulted concering him, whether he was destined to see the distant season of mature old age; the prophet, expounding destiny, said, "If he never recognises himself." Long did the words of the soothsayer appear frivolous; but the event, the thing itself, the manner of his death, and the novel nature of his frenzy, confirmed it.

And now the son of Cephisus had added one to three times five years, and he might seem to be a boy and a young man as well. Many a youth, and many a damsel, courted him; but there was so stubborn a pride in his youthful beauty, that no youths, no damsels made any impression on him. The noisy Nymph, who has neither learned to hold her tongue after another speaking, nor to speak first herself, resounding Echo, espied him, as he was driving the timid stags into his nets. Echo was then a body, not a voice; and yet the babbler had no other use of her speech than she now has, to be able to repeat the last words out of many. Juno had done this; because when often she might have been able to detect the Nymphs in the mountains in the embrace of her husband, Jupiter, she purposely used to detain the Goddess with a long story, until the Nymphs had escaped. After the daughter of Saturn perceived this, she said, "But small exercise of this tongue, with which I have been deluded, shall be allowed thee, and a very short use of thy voice." And she confirmed her threats by the event. Still, in the end of one's speaking she redoubles the voice, and returns the words she hears. When, therefore, she beheld Narcissus wandering through the pathless forests, and fell in love with him, she stealthily followed his steps; and the more she followed him, with the nearer flame did she burn. In no other manner than as when the native sulphur, spread around the tops of torches, catches the flame applied to it. Ah! how often did she desire to accost him in soft accents, and to employ soft entreaties!

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[1] This name is from the Greek word *narkain,* "to fade away," which was characteristic of the youth's career, and of the duration of the flower.

Nature resists, and suffers her not to begin; but what Nature does permit, that she is ready for; to await his voice, to which to return her own words.

By chance, the youth, being separated from the trusty company of his attendants, cries out, "Is there any one here?" and Echo answers "Here!" He is amazed; and when he has cast his eyes on every side, he cries out with a loud voice, "Come!" Whereon she calls the youth who calls. He looks back; and again, as no one comes, he says, "Why dost thou avoid me?" and just as many words as he spoke, he receives. He persists; and being deceived by the imitation of an alternate voice, he says, "Let us come together here;" and Echo, that could never more willingly answer any sound whatever, replies, "Let us come together here!" and she follows up her own words, and rushing from the woods, is going to throw her arms around the neck she has so longed for. He flies; and as he flies, he exclaims, "Remove thy hands from thus embracing me; I will die first, before thou shalt have the enjoyment of me." She answers nothing but "Have the enjoyment of me." Thus rejected, she lies hid in the woods, and hides her blushing face with green leaves, and from that time lives in lonely caves; but yet her love remains, and increases from the mortification of her refusal. Watchful cares waste away her miserable body; leanness shrivels her skin, and all the juices of her body fly off in air. Her voice and her bones alone are left.

Her voice still continues, but they say that her bones received the form of stones. Since then, she lies concealed in the woods, and is never seen on the mountains; but is heard in all of them. It is her voice alone which remains alive in her.

FABLE VII

Narcissus falls in love with his own shadow, which he sees in a fountain; and, pining to death, the Gods change him into a flower, which still bears his name.

Thus had he deceived her, thus, too, other Nymphs that sprung from the water or the mountains, thus the throng of

youths before them. Some one, therefore, who had been despised by him, lifting up his hands towards heaven said, "Thus, though he should love, let him not enjoy what he loves!" Rhamnusia[1] assented to a prayer so reasonable. There was a clear spring, like silver, with its unsullied waters, which neither shepherds, nor she-goats feeding on the mountains, nor any other cattle, had touched; which neither bird nor wild beast had disturbed, nor bough falling from a tree. There was grass around it, which the neighbouring water nourished, and a wood, that suffered the stream to become warm with no rays of the sun. Here the youth, fatigued both with the labour of hunting and the heat, lay down, attracted by the appearance of the spot, and the spring; and, while he was endeavouring to quench his thirst, another thirst grew upon him.

While he is drinking, being attracted with the reflection of his own form, seen in the water, he falls in love with a thing that has no substance; and he thinks that to be a body, which is but a shadow. He is astonished at himself, and remains unmoved with the same countenance, like a statue formed of Parian marble. Lying on the ground, he gazes on his eyes like two stars, and fingers worthy of Bacchus, and hair worthy of Apollo, and his youthful cheeks and ivory neck, and the comeliness of his mouth, and his blushing complexion mingled with the whiteness of snow; and everything he admires, for which he himself is worthy to be admired. In his ignorance, he covets himself; and he that approves, is himself the thing approved. While he pursues he is pursued, and at the same moment he inflames and burns. How often does he give vain kisses to the deceitful spring; how often does he thrust his arms, catching at the neck he sees, into the

[1] Nemesis, the Goddess of Retribution, and the avenger of crime, was the daughter of Jupiter. She had a famous temple at Rhamnus, one of the "pagi," or boroughs of Athens. Her statue was there carved by Phidias out of the marble which the Persians brought into Greece for the purpose of making a statue of Victory out of it, and which was thus appropriately devoted to the Goddess of Retribution. This statue wore a crown, and had wings, and holding a spear of ash in the right hand, it was seated on a stag.

middle of the water, and yet he does not catch himself in them. He knows not what he sees, but what he sees, by it is he inflamed; and the same mistake that deceives his eyes, provokes them. Why, credulous youth, dost thou vainly catch at the flying image? What thou art seeking is nowhere; what thou art in love with, turn but away and thou shalt lose it; what thou seest, the same is but the shadow of a reflected form: it has nothing of its own. It comes and stays with thee; with thee it will depart, if thou canst but depart thence.

No regard for food, no regard for repose, can draw him away thence; but, lying along upon the overshadowed grass, he gazes upon the fallacious image with unsatiated eyes, and by his own sight he himself is undone. Raising himself a little while, extending his arms to the woods that stand around him, he says, "Was ever, O, ye woods! any one more fatally in love? For this ye know, and have been a convenient shelter for many a one. And do you remember any one, who ever thus pined away, during so long a time, though so many ages of your life has been spent? It both pleases me, and I see it; but what I see, and what pleases me, yet I cannot obtain; so great a mistake possesses one in love; and to make me grieve the more, neither a vast sea separates us, nor a long way, nor mountains, nor a city with its gates closed: we are kept asunder by a little water. He himself wishes to be embraced; for as often as I extend my lips to the limpid stream, so often does he struggle towards me with his face held up; you would think he might be touched. It is a very little that stands in the way of lovers. Whoever thou art, come up hither. Why, dear boy, the choice one, dost thou deceive me? or whither dost thou retire, when pursued? Surely, neither my form nor my age is such as thou shouldst shun; the Nymphs, too, have courted me. Thou encouragest I know not what hopes in me with that friendly look, and when I extend my arms to thee, thou willingly extendest thine; when I smile, thou smilest in return; often too, have I observed thy tears, when I was weeping; my signs, too, thou returnest by thy nods, and, as I guess by the motion of thy beauteous mouth, thou returnest words that come not to

my ears. In thee 'tis I, I now perceive; nor does my form deceive me. I burn with the love of myself, and both raise the flames and endure them. What shall I do? Should I be entreated, or should I entreat? What, then, shall I entreat? What I desire is in my power; plenty has made me poor. Oh! would that I could depart from my own body! a new wish, indeed, in a lover; I could wish that what I am in love with was away. And now grief is taking away my strength, and no long period of my life remains; and in my early days am I cut off: nor is death grievous to me, now about to get rid of my sorrows by death. I wish that he who is beloved could enjoy a longer life. Now we two, of one mind, shall die in the extinction of one life."

Thus he said, and, with his mind but ill at ease, he returned to the same reflection, and disturbed the water with his tears; and the form was rendered defaced by the moving of the stream; when he saw it beginning to disappear, he cried aloud, "Whither dost thou fly? Stay, I beseech thee! and do not in thy cruelty abandon thy lover; let it be allowed me to behold that which I may not touch, and to give nourishment to my wretched frenzy." And, while he was grieving, he tore his garment from the upper border, and beat his naked breast with his palms, white as marble. His breast, when struck, received a little redness, no otherwise than as apples are wont, which are partly white and partly red; or as a grape, not yet ripe, in the parti-coloured clusters, is wont to assume a purple tint. Soon as he beheld this again in the water, when clear, he could not endure it any longer; but, as yellow wax with the fire, or the hoar frost of the morning, is wont to waste away with the warmth of the sun, so he, consumed by love, pined away, and wasted by degrees with a hidden flame. And now, no longer was his complexion of white mixed with red; neither his vigour nor his strength, nor the points which had charmed when seen so lately, nor even his body, which formerly Echo had been in love with, now remained. Yet, when she saw these things, although angry, and mindful of his usage of her, she was grieved, and, as often as the unhappy youth said, "Alas!" she repeated, "Alas!" with re-echoing voice; and when he struck his

arms with his hands, she, too, returned the like sound of a blow.

His last accents, as he looked into the water, as usual, were these: "Ah, youth, beloved in vain!" and the spot returned just as many words; and after he had said, "Farewell!" Echo too, said, "Farewell!" He laid down his wearied head upon the green grass, when night closed the eyes that admired the beauty of their master; and even then, after he had been received into the infernal abodes, he used to look at himself in the Stygian waters. His Naiad sisters lamented him, and laid their hair, cut off, over their brother; the Dryads, too, lamented him, and Echo resounded to their lamentations. And now they were preparing the funeral pile, and the shaken torches, and the bier. The body was nowhere to be found. Instead of his body, they found a yellow flower, with white leaves encompassing it in the middle.

FABLE VIII

Pentheus ridicules the predictions of Tiresias; and not only forbids his people to worship Bacchus, who had just entered Greece in triumph, but even commands them to capture him, and to bring him into his presence. Under the form of Acœtes, one of his companions, Bacchus suffers that indignity, and relates to Pentheus the wonders which the God had wrought. The recital enrages Pentheus still more, who thereupon goes to Mount Cithæron, to disturb the orgies then celebrating there; on which his own mother and the other Bacchantes tear him to pieces.

This thing, when known, brought deserved fame to the prophet through the cities of Achaia;[1] and great was the reputation of the soothsayer. Yet Pentheus, the son of Echion, a contemner of the Gods above, alone, of all men, despises him, and derides the predicting words of the old man, and upbraids him with his darkened state, and the misfortune

[1] Achaia was properly the name of a part of Peloponnesus, on the gulf of Corinth; but the name is very frequently applied to the whole of Greece.

of having lost his sight. He, shaking his temples, white with hoary hair, says: "How fortunate wouldst thou be, if thou as well couldst become deprived of this light, that thou mightst not behold the rites of Bacchus. For soon the day will come, and even now I predict that it is not far off, when the new God Liber, the son of Semele, shall come hither. Unless thou shalt vouchsafe him the honour of a temple, thou shalt be scattered, torn in pieces, in a thousand places, and with thy blood thou shalt pollute both the woods, and thy mother and the sisters of thy mother. These things will come to pass; for thou wilt not vouchsafe honour to the Divinity; and thou wilt complain that under this darkness I have seen too much."

The son of Echion drives him away as he says such things as these. Confirmation follows his words, and the predictions of the prophet are fulfilled. Liber comes, and the fields resound with festive howlings. The crowd runs out; both matrons and new-married women mixed with the men, both high and low, are borne along to the celebration of rites till then unknown. "What madness," says Pentheus, "has confounded your minds, O ye warlike men,[1] descendants of the Dragon? Can brass knocked against brass prevail so much with you? And the pipe with the bending horn, and these magical delusions? And shall the yells of women, and madness produced by wine, and troops of effeminate wretches, and empty tambourines prevail over you, whom neither the warrior's sword nor the trumpet could affright, nor troops with weapons prepared for fight? Am I to wonder at you, old men, who, carried over distant seas, have fixed in these abodes a new Tyre, and your banished household Gods, but who now allow them to be taken without a struggle? Or you, of more vigorous age, and nearer to my own, ye youths; whom it was befitting to be brandishing arms, and not the thyrsus[2] and to be covered with helmets, not green leaves?

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[1] The Thebans were sprung from the teeth of the dragon, who was said to be a son of Mars.

[2] A long staff, carried by Bacchus, and by the Satyrs and Bacchanalians engaged in the worship of the God of the grape.

Do be mindful, I entreat you, of what race you are sprung, and assume the courage of that dragon, who though but one, destroyed many. He died for his springs and his stream; but do you conquer for your own fame. He put the valiant to death; do you expel the feeble foe, and regain your country's honour. If the fates forbid Thebes to stand long, I wish that engines of war [1] and men should demolish the walls, and that fire and sword should resound. Then should we be wretched without any fault of our own, and our fate were to be lamented, but not concealed, and our tears would be free from shame. But now Thebes will be taken by an unarmed boy, whom neither wars delight, nor weapons, nor the employment of horses, but hair wet with myrrh, and effeminate chaplets, and purple, and gold interwoven with embroidered garments; whom I, indeed, (do you only stand aside) will presently compel to own that his father is assumed, and that his sacred rites are fictitious. Has Acrisius [2] courage enough to despise the vain Deity, and to shut the gates of Argos against his approach; and shall this stranger affright Pentheus with all Thebes? Go quickly, (this order he gives to his servants,) go, and bring hither in chains the ringleader. Let there be no slothful delay in executing my commands."

His grandfather, Cadmus, Athamas, and the rest of the company of his friends rebuke him with expostulations, and in vain strive to restrain him. By their admonition he becomes more violent, and by being curbed his fury is irritated, and is on the increase, and the very restraint did him injury. So have I beheld a torrent, where nothing obstructed it in its course, run gently and with moderate noise; but wherever beams and stones in its way withheld it, it ran foaming and

[1] The larger engines of destruction used in ancient warfare. The "balista" was used to impel stones; the "catapulta," darts and arrows. In sieges, the "Aries," or "battering ram," which received its name from having an iron head resembling that of a ram, was employed in destroying the lower part of the wall, while the "balista" was overthrowing the battlements, and the "catapulta" was employed to shoot any of the besieged who appeared between them.

[2] A king of Argos, who refused, and probably with justice, to admit Bacchus or his rites within the gates of his city.

raging, and more violent from its obstruction. Behold! the servants return, all stained with blood; and when their master enquires where Bacchus is, they deny that they have seen Bacchus. "But this one," say they, "we have taken, who was his attendant and minister in his sacred rites." And then they deliver one, who, from the Etrurian nation, had followed the sacred rites of the Deity, with his hands bound behind his back.

Pentheus looks at him with eyes that anger has made terrible, and although he can scarcely defer the time of his punishment, he says, "O wretch, doomed to destruction, and about, by thy death, to set an example to others, tell me thy name, and the name of thy parents, and thy country, and why thou dost attend the sacred rites of a new fashion." He, void of fear, says, "My name is Acœtes; Mæonia[1] is my country; my parents were of humble station. My father left me no fields for the hardy oxen to till, no wool-bearing flocks, nor any herds. He himself was but poor, and he was wont with line, and hooks, to deceive the leaping fishes, and to take them with the rod. His trade was his only possession. When he gave that calling over to me, he said, 'Receive, as the successor and heir of my employment, those riches which I possess'; and at his death he left me nothing but the streams. This one thing alone can I call my patrimony. But soon, that I might not always be confined to the same rocks, I learned with a steadying right hand to guide the helm of the ship, and I made observation with my eyes of the showery Constellation of the Olenian she-goat,[2] and Taygete,[3]

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[1] Colonists were said to have proceeded from Lydia, or Mæonia, to the coasts of Etruria. Bacchus assumes the name of Acœtes, from the Greek *akoitēs*, "sleepless"; which ought to be the characteristic of the careful pilot.

[2] Amalthea, the goat that suckled Jupiter, is called Olenian, either because she was reared in Olenus, a city of Bœotia, or because she was placed as a Constellation between the arms, *olenai*, of the Constellation Auriga, or the Charioteer. The rising and setting of this Constellation were supposed to produce showers.

[3] One of the Pleiades, the daughters of Atlas, who were placed among the Constellations.

and the Hyades,[1] and the Bear, and the quarters of the winds, and the harbours fit for ships. By chance, as I was making for Delos, I touched at the coast of the land of Dia,[2] and came up to the shore by plying the oars on the right side; and I gave a nimble leap, and lighted upon the wet sand. When the night was past, and dawn first began to grow red, I arose and ordered my men to take in fresh water, and I pointed out the way which led to the stream. I myself, from a lofty eminence, looked around to see what the breeze promised me; and then I called my companions, and returned to the vessel. 'Lo! we are here,' says Opheltes, my chief mate; and having found, as he thought, a prize in the lonely fields, he was leading along the shore, a body with all the beauty of a girl. He, heavy with wine and sleep, seemed to stagger, and to follow with difficulty. I examined his dress, his looks, and his gait, and I saw nothing there which could be taken to be mortal. I both was sensible of it, and I said to my companions, 'I am in doubt what Deity is in that body; but in that body a Deity there is. Whoever thou art, O be propitious and assist our toils; and pardon these as well.' 'Cease praying for us,' said Dictys, than whom there were not another more nimble at climbing to the main-top-yards, and at sliding down by catching hold of a rope. This Libys, this the yellow-haired Melanthus, the guardian of the prow, and this Alcimedon approved of; and Epopeus as well, the cheerer of their spirits, who by his voice gave both rest and time to the oars; and so did all the rest; so blind is the greed for booty. 'However,' I said, 'I will not allow this ship to be damaged by this sacred freight. Here I have the greatest share of right,' and I opposed them at the entrance.

"Lycabas, the boldest of all the number, was enraged, who, expelled from a city of Etruria was suffering exile as the punishment for a dreadul murder. He, while I was resisting, seized hold of my throat with his youthful fist, and shak-

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[1] The Dodonides, or nurses of Bacchus, whom Jupiter, as a mark of his favour, placed in the number of the Constellations. Their name is derived from *huein*, "to rain."

[2] This was another name of the Isle of Naxos.

ing me, had thrown me overboard into the sea, if I had not, although stunned, held fast by grasping a rope. The impious crew approved of the deed. Then at last Bacchus (for Bacchus it was), as though his sleep had been broken by the noise, and his sense was returning into his breast after much wine, said: 'What are you doing? What is this noise? Tell me, sailors, by what means have I come hither? Whither do you intend to carry me?' 'Lay aside thy fears,' said Proreus, 'and tell us what port thou wouldst wish to reach. Thou shalt stop at the land that thou desirest.' 'Direct your course then to Naxos,' says Liber, 'that is my home; it shall prove a hospitable land for you.'

"In their deceit they swore by the ocean and by all the Deities, that so it should be; and bade me give sail to the painted ship. Naxos was to our right; and as I was accordingly setting sail for the right hand, every one said for himself, 'What art thou about, madman? What insanity possesses thee, Acœtes? Stand away to the left.' The greater part signified their meaning to me by signs; some whispered in my ear what they wanted. I was at a loss, and I said, 'Let some one else take the helm;' and I withdrew myself from the execution both of their wickedness, and of my own calling. I was reviled by them all, and the whole crew muttered reproaches against me. Æthalion, among them, says, 'As if, forsooth, all our safety is centred in thee,' and he himself comes up, and takes my duty; leaving Naxos, he steers a different course. Then the God, mocking them as if he had at last but that moment discovered their knavery, looks down upon the sea from the crooked stern; and, like one weeping, he says: 'These are not the shores, sailors, that you have promised me; this is not the land desired by me. By what act have I deserved this treatment? What honour is it to you, if you that are young men, deceive a mere boy? if you that are many, deceive me, who am but one?' I had been weeping for some time. The impious gang laughed at my tears, and beat the sea with hastening oars. Now by himself do I swear to thee (and no God is there more powerful than he), that I am relating things to thee as true, as they are beyond all belief. The ship stood

still upon the ocean, no otherwise than if it was occupying a dry dock. They, wondering at it, persisted in the plying of their oars; they unfurled their sails, and endeavoured to speed onward with this two-fold aid. Ivy impeded the oars, and twined around them in encircling wreaths, and clung to the sails with heavy clusters of berries. He himself, having his head encircled with bunches of grapes, brandished a lance covered with vine leaves. Around him, tigers and visionary forms of lynxes, and savage bodies of spotted panthers, were extended.

"The men leaped overboard, whether it was madness or fear that caused this; and first of all, Medon began to grow black with fins, with a flattened body, and to bend in the curvature of the back-bone. To him Lycabas said, 'Into what prodigy art thou changing?' and, as he spoke, the opening of his mouth was wide, his nose became crooked, and his hardened skin received scales upon it. But Libys, while he was attempting to urge on the resisting oars, saw his hands shrink into a small compass, and now to be hands no longer, and that now, in fact, they may be pronounced fins. Another, desirous to extend his arms to the twisting ropes, had no arms, and becoming crooked, with a body deprived of limbs, he leaped into the waves; the end of his tail was hooked, just as the horns of the half-moon are curved. They flounce about on every side, and bedew the ship with plenteous spray, and again they emerge, and once more they return beneath the waves. They sport with all the appearance of a dance, and toss their sportive bodies, and blow forth the sea, received within their wide nostrils. Of twenty the moment before (for so many did that ship carry), I was the only one remaining. The God encouraged me, frightened and chilled with my body all trembling, and scarcely myself, saying, 'Shake off thy fear, and make for Dia.' Arriving there, I attended upon the sacred rites of Bacchus, at the kindled altars."

"We have lent ear to a long story," says Pentheus, "that our anger might consume its strength in its tediousness. Servants! drag him headlong, and send to Stygian night his body, racked with dreadful tortures." At once the Etrurian

Acœtes, dragged away, is shut up in a strong prison; and while the cruel instruments of the death that is ordered, and the iron and the fire are being made ready, the report is that the doors opened of their own accord, and that the chains, of their own accord, slipped from off his arms, no one loosening them.

The son of Echion persists; and now he does not command others to go, but goes himself to where Cithæron,[1] chosen for the celebration of these sacred rites, was resounding with singing, and the shrill voices of the votaries of Bacchus. Just as the high-mettled steed neighs, when the warlike trumpeter gives the alarm with the sounding brass, and conceives a desire for battle, so did the sky, struck with the long-drawn howlings, excite Pentheus, and his wrath was rekindled on hearing the clamour. There was, about the middle of the mountain, the woods skirting its extremity, a plain free from trees, and visible on every side. Here his mother was the first to see him looking on the sacred rites with profane eyes; she first was moved by a frantic impulse, and she first wounded her son, Pentheus, by hurling her thyrsus, and cried out, "Ho! come, my two sisters;[2] that boar which, of enormous size, is roaming amid our fields, that boar I must strike." All the raging multitude rushes upon him alone; all collect together, and all follow him, now trembling, now uttering words less atrocious than before, now blaming himself, now confessing that he has offended.

However, on being wounded, he says, "Give me thy aid, Autonoë, my aunt; let the ghost of Actæon[3] influence thy feelings." She knows not what Actæon means, and tears away his right hand as he is praying; the other is dragged off by the violence of Ino. The wretched man has now no

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[1] A mountain of Bœotia, famous for the orgies of Bacchus there celebrated.

[2] These were Ino and Autonoë.

[3] He appeals to Autonoë, the mother of Actæon, to remember the sad fate of her own son, and to show him some mercy; but in vain: for drunkenness had taken away both her reason and her memory.

arms to extend to his mother; but shewing his maimed body, with the limbs torn off, he says, "Look at this, my mother!" At the sight Agave howls aloud, and tosses her neck, and shakes her locks in the air; and seizing his head, torn off, with her blood-stained fingers, she cries out, "Ho! my companions, this victory is our work!"

The wind does not more speedily bear off, from a lofty tree, the leaves nipped by the cold autumn, and now adhering with difficulty, than were the limbs of the man, torn asunder by their accursed hands. Admonished by such examples, the Ismenian matrons frequent the new worship, and offer frankincense, and reverence the sacred altars.

BOOK THE FOURTH

FABLE I

The daughters of Minyas, instead of celebrating the festival of Bacchus, apply themselves to other pursuits during the ceremonies; and among several narratives which they relate to pass away the time, they divert themselves with the story of the adventures of Pyramus and Thisbe. These lovers having made an appointment to meet without the walls of Babylon, Thisbe arrives first; but at the sight of a lioness, she runs to hide herself in a cave, and in her alarm, drops her veil. Pyramus, arriving soon after, finds the veil of his mistress stained with blood; and believing her to be dead, kills himself with his own sword. Thisbe returns from the cave; and finding Pyramus weltering in his blood, she plunges the same fatal weapon into her own breast.

But Alcithoë, the daughter of Minyas, does not think that the rites of the God ought to be received; but still, in her rashness, denies that Bacchus is the progeny of Jupiter; and she has her sisters[1] as partners in her impiety.

[1] The names of the sisters of Alcithoë were Aristippe and Leucippe. Ælian says that the truth of the case was, that they were decent women, fond of their husbands and families, who preferred stay-

The priest had ordered both mistresses and maids, laying aside their employments, to have their breasts covered with skins, and to loosen the fillets of their hair, and to put garlands on their locks, and to take the verdant thyrsi in their hands; and had prophesied that severe would be the resentment of the Deity, if affronted. Both matrons and new-married women obey, and lay aside their webs and work-baskets, and their tasks unfinished; and offer frankincense, and invoke both Bacchus and Bromius, and Lyæus, and the son of the Flames, and the Twice-Born, and the only one that had two mothers. To these is added the name of Nyseus, and the unshorn Thyoneus, and with Lenæus, the planter of the genial grape, and Nyctelius, and father Eleleus, and Iacchus, and Evan, and a great many other names, which thou, Liber, hast besides, throughout the nations of Greece.[1] For thine is youth everlasting; thou art a boy to all time, thou art beheld as the most beauteous of all in high heaven; thou hast the features of a virgin, when thou standest without thy horns. By thee the East was conquered, as far as where swarthy India is bounded by the remote Ganges. Thou God, worthy of our veneration, didst smite Pentheus, and the axe-bearing Lycurgus,[2] sacrilegious mortals; thou didst hurl the bodies of the Etrurians into the sea. Thou controllest the neck of the lynxes yoked to thy chariot, graced with the painted reins. The Bacchanals and the Satyrs follow thee; the drunken old man, too, Silenus, who supports his reeling limbs with a staff, and sticks by no means very fast to his bending ass. And wherever thou goest, the shouts of youths, and together the voices of women, and tambourines beaten with the hands, and hollow cymbals resound, and the box-

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ing at home, and attending to their domestic concerns, to running after the new rites; on which it was said, by their enemies, that Bacchus had punished them.

[1] These names have various meanings, pertaining to attributes of Bacchus.

[2] A king of Thrace, who having slighted the worship of Bacchus, was afflicted with madness, and hewed off his own legs with a hatchet, and, according to Apollodorus, mistaking his own son Dryas for a vine, destroyed him with the same weapon.

wood pipe, with its long bore. The Ismenian matrons ask thee to show thyself mild and propitious, and celebrate thy sacred rites as prescribed.

The daughters of Minyas alone, within doors, interrupting the festival with unseasonable labour, are either carding wool, or twirling the threads with their fingers, or are plying at the web, and keeping the handmaids to their work. One of them, as she is drawing the thread with her smooth thumb, says, "While others are idling, and thronging to these fanciful rites, let us, whom Pallas, a better Deity, occupies, alleviate the useful toil of our hands with varying discourse; and let us relate by turns to our disengaged ears, for the general amusement, something each in our turn, that will not permit the time to seem long."

They approve of what she says, and her sisters bid her to be the first to tell her story.

She considers which of many she shall tell (for she knows many a one), and she is in doubt whether she shall tell of thee, Babylonian Decretis,[1] whom the people of Palestine,[2] believe to inhabit the pools, with thy changed form, scales covering thy limbs; or rather how her daughter, taking wings, passed her latter years in whitened turrets; or how a Naiad,[3] by charms and too potent herbs, changed the bodies of the young men into silent fishes, until she suffered the same herself. Or how the tree which bore white fruit formerly, now bears it of purple hue, from the contact of blood. This story pleases her; this, because it was no common tale,

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[1] Atergatis was another name of this Goddess. She was said, by an illicit amour, to have been the mother of Semiramis, and in despair, to have thrown herself into a lake near Ascalon, on which she was changed into a fish.

[2] Palæstina, or Philistia, in which Ascalon was situate, was a part of Syria, lying in its southwestern extremity.

[3] The Naiad here mentioned is supposed to have been a Nymph of the Island of the Sun, called also Nosola, between Taprobana (the modern Ceylon) and the coast of Carmania (perhaps Coromandel), who was in the habit of changing such youths as fell into her hands into fishes. As a reward for her cruelty, she herself was changed into a fish by the Sun.

she began in manner such as this, while the wool followed the thread:—

"Pyramus and Thisbe, the one the most beauteous of youths, the other preferred before all the damsels that the East contained, lived in adjoining houses; where Semiramis is said to have surrounded her lofty city with walls of brick. The nearness caused their first acquaintance, and their first advances in love; with time their affection increased. They would have united themselves, too, by the tie of marriage, but their fathers forbade it. A thing which they could not forbid, they were both inflamed, with minds equally captivated. There is no one acquainted with it; by nods and signs, they hold converse. And the more the fire is smothered, the more, when so smothered, does it burn. The party-wall, common to the two houses, was cleft by a small chink, which it had got formerly, when it was built. This defect, remarked by no one for so many ages, you lovers (what does not love perceive?) first found one, and you made it a passage for your voices, and the accents of love used to pass through it in safety, with the gentlest murmur. Oftentimes, after they had taken their stations, Thisbe on one side, and Pyramus on the other, and the breath of their mouths had been mutually caught by turns they used to say, 'Envious wall, why dost thou stand in the way of lovers? what great matter were it, for thee to suffer us to be joined with our entire bodies? Or if that is too much, that, at least, thou shouldst open, for the exchange of kisses. Nor are we ungrateful; we confess that we are indebted to thee, that a passage has been given for our words to our lovings ears.' Having said thus much, in vain, on their respective sides, about night they said, 'Farewell;' and gave those kisses each on their own side, which did not reach the other side.

"The following morning had removed the fires of the night, and the Sun, with his rays, had dried the grass wet with rime, when they met together at the wonted spot. Then, first complaining much in low murmurs, they determine, in the silent night, to try to deceive their keepers, and to steal out of doors; and when they have left the house, to quit the buildings of the city as well; but that they may not have to

wander, roaming in the open fields, to meet at the tomb of Ninus,[1] and to conceal themselves beneath the shade of a tree. There was there a lofty mulberry tree, very full of snow-white fruit, quite close to a cold spring. The arrangement suits them; and the light, seeming to depart but slowly, is buried in the waters, and from the same waters the night arises. The clever Thisbe, turning the hinge, gets out in the dark, and deceives her attendants, and, having covered her face, arrives at the tomb, and sits down under the tree agreed upon; love made her bold. Lo! a lioness approaches, having her foaming jaws besmeared with the recent slaughter of oxen, about to quench her thirst with the water of the neighbouring spring. The Babylonian Thisbe sees her at a distance, by the rays of the moon, and with a trembling foot she flies to a dark cave; and while she flies, her veil falling from her back, she leaves it behind. When the savage lioness has quenched her thirst with plenteous water, as she is returning into the woods, she tears the thin covering, found by chance without Thisbe herself, with her blood-stained mouth.

"Pyramus, going out later than Thisbe, saw the evident foot-marks of a wild beast, in the deep dust, and grew pale all over his face. But, as soon as he found her veil, as well, dyed with blood, he said; 'One night will be the ruin of two lovers, of whom she was the most deserving of a long life. My soul is guilty; 'tis I that have destroyed thee, much to be lamented; who bade thee to come by night to places full of terror, and came not hither first. O, whatever lions are lurking beneath this rock, tear my body in pieces, and devour my accursed entrails with ruthless jaws. But it is the part of a coward to wish for death.' He takes up the veil of Thisbe, and he takes it with himself to the shade of the tree agreed on, and, after he has bestowed tears on the well-known garment, he gives kisses to the same, and he says, 'Receive, now, a draught of my blood as well!' and then plunges the sword,

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[1] According to Diodorus Siculus, the sepulchre of Ninus, the first king of Babylon, was ten stadia in length, and nine in depth; it had the appearance of a vast citadel, and was at a considerable distance from the city of Babylon.

with which he is girt, into his bowels; and without delay, as he is dying, he draws it out of the warm wound. As he falls on his back upon the ground, the blood spirts forth on high, no otherwise than as when a pipe is burst on the lead decaying, and shoots out afar the liquid water from the hissing flaw, and cleaves the air with its jet. The fruit of the tree, by the sprinkling of the blood, are changed to a dark tint, and the root, soaked with the gore, tints the hanging mulberries with a purple hue. Behold! not yet having banished her fear, Thisbe returns, that she may not disappoint her lover, and seeks for the youth both with her eyes and her affection, and longs to tell him how great dangers she has escaped. And when she observes the spot, and the altered appearance of the tree, she doubts if it is the same, so uncertain does the colour of the fruit make her. While she is in doubt, she sees the palpitating limbs throbbing upon the bloody ground; she draws back her foot, and having her face paler than box-wood, she shudders like the sea, which trembles when its surface is skimmed by a gentle breeze. But, after pausing a time, she had recognized her own lover, she smote her arms, undeserving of such usage, and tearing her hair, and embracing the much-loved body, she filled the gashes with her tears, and mingled her tokens of sorrow with his blood; and imprinting kisses on his cold features, she exclaimed, 'Pyramus! what disaster has taken thee away from me? Pyramus! answer me; 'tis thy own Thisbe, dearest, that calls thee; hear me, and raise thy prostrate features.'

"At the name of Thisbe Pyramus raised his eyes, now heavy with death, and, after he had seen her, he closed them again. After she had perceived her own garment, and beheld, too, the ivory sheath without its sword, she said, ''Tis thy own hand, and love, that has destroyed thee, ill-fated youth! I, too, have a hand bold enough for this one purpose; I have love as well; this shall give me strength for the wound. I will follow thee in thy death, and I shall be called the most unhappy cause and companion of thy fate; and thou who, alas! couldst be torn from me by death alone, shalt not be able, even by death, to be torn from me. And you, O most wretched parents of mine and his, be but prevailed upon, in

this one thing, by the entreaties of us both, that you will not deny those whom their constant love and whom their last moments have joined, to be buried in the same tomb. But thou, O tree, which now with thy boughs dost overshadow the luckless body of but one, art fated soon to cover those of two. Retain a token of this our fate, and ever bear fruit black and suited for mourning, as a memorial of the blood of us two.' Thus she said; and having fixed the point under the lower part of her breast, she fell upon the sword, which still was reeking with his blood.

"Her prayers, however, moved the Gods, and moved their parents. For the colour of the fruit, when it has fully ripened, is black;[1] and what was left of them, from the funeral pile, reposed in the same urn."

FABLE II

The Sun discovers to Vulcan the intrigue between Mars and Venus, and then, himself, falls in love with Leucothoë. Venus, in revenge for the discovery, resolves to make his amours unfortunate.

Here she ended; and there was but a short time betwixt, and then Leuconoë began to speak. Her sisters held their peace. "Love has captivated even this Sun, who rules all things by his æthereal light. I will relate the loves of the Sun. This God is supposed to have been the first to see the adultery of Venus with Mars; this God is the first to see every thing. He was grieved at what was done, and showed to the husband, the son of Juno, the wrong done to his bed, and the place of the intrigue. Both his senses, and the work which his skilful right hand was then holding, quitted him on the instant. Immediately, he files out some slender chains of brass, and nets, and meshes, which can escape the eye. The finest threads cannot surpass that work, nor yet the cobweb

[1] Ovid thus accounts for the deep purple hue of the mulberry: which, before the event mentioned here, he says was white.

that hangs from the top of the beam. He makes it so, too, as to yield to a slight touch, and gentle movement, and skilfully arranges it, drawn around the bed. When the wife and the gallant come into the same bed, being both caught through the artifice of the husband, and chains prepared by this new contrivance, they are held fast in the very midst of their embraces.

"The Lemnian God immediately threw open the folding doors of ivory, and admitted the Deities. There they lay disgracefully bound. And yet many a one of the Gods, not the serious ones, could fain wish thus to become disgraced. The Gods of heaven laughed, and for a long time was this the most noted story in all heaven. The Cytherean[1] goddess exacts satisfaction of the Sun, in remembrance of this betrayal; and, in her turn, disturbs him with the like passion, who had disturbed her secret amours. What now, son of Hyperion,[2] does thy beauty, thy heat, and thy radiant light avail thee? For thou, who dost burn all lands with thy flames, art now burnt with a new flame; and thou, who oughtst to be looking at everything, art gazing on Leucothoë, and on one maiden art fixing those eyes which thou oughtst to be fixing on the universe. At one time thou art rising earlier in the Eastern sky; at another thou art setting late in the waves; and in taking time to gaze on her, thou art lengthening the hours of mid-winter. Sometimes thou art eclipsed, and the trouble of thy mind affects thy light, and, darkened, thou fillest with terror the breasts of mortals. Nor art thou pale, because the form of the moon, nearer to the earth, stands in thy way. It is that passion which occasions this complexion. Thou lovest her alone, neither does Clymene, nor Rhodos,[3]

[1] Cythera was an island on the southern coast of Laconia; where Venus was supposed to have landed, after she had risen from the sea. It was dedicated to her worship.

[2] Hyperion was the son of Cœlus or Uranus, and the father of the Sun. The name is, however, often given by the poets to the Sun himself.

[3] A damsel of the Isle of Rhodes, the daughter of Neptune, and, according to some, of Venus. She was greatly beloved by Apollo, to whom she bore seven children.

nor the most beauteous mother[1] of the Ææan Circe engage thee, nor yet Clytie, who, though despised, was longing for thy embraces; at that very time thou wast suffering these grievous pangs. Leucothoë occasioned the forgetting of many a damsel; she, whom Eurynome, the most beauteous of the perfume-bearing nation[2] produced. But after her daughter grew up, as much as the mother excelled all other Nymphs, so much did her daughter excel the mother. Her father, Orchamus, ruled over the Achæmenian[3] cities, and he is reckoned the seventh in descent from the ancient Belus.

"The pastures of the horses of the Sun are under the Western sky; instead of grass, they have ambrosia. That nourishes their limbs wearied with their daily service, and refits them for labour. And while the coursers are there eating their heavenly food, and night is taking her turn; the God enters the beloved chamber, changed into the shape of her mother Eurynome, and beholds Leucothoë among twice six handmaids, near the threshold, drawing out the smooth threads with her twirling spindle. When, therefore, as though her mother, he has given kisses to her dear daughter, he says, 'There is a secret matter, which I have to mention; maids, withdraw, and take not from a mother the privilege of speaking in private with her daughter.' They obey; and the God being left in the chamber without any witness, he says, 'I am he, who measures out the long year, who beholds all things, and through whom the earth sees all things; the eye, in fact, of the universe. Believe me, thou art pleasing to me.'

"She is affrighted; and in her alarm, both her distaff and her spindle fall from her relaxed fingers. Her very fear becomes her; and he, no longer delaying, returns to his true shape, and his wonted beauty. But the maiden, although star-

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[1] Persa, the daughter of Oceanus, and the mother of the enchantress Circe, who is here called "Ææa," from Ææa, a city and peninsula of Colchis.

[2] Arabia.

[3] Persia is called Achæmenia, from Achæmenes, one of its former kings.

tled at the unexpected sight, overcome by the beauty of the God, and dismissing all complaints, submits to his embrace.

FABLE III

Clytie, in a fit of revenge, discovers the adventure of Leucothoë to her father, who orders her to be buried alive. The Sun, grieved at her misfortune, changed her into the frankincense tree; he also despises the informer, who pines away for love of him, and is at last changed into the heliotrope.

Clytie envied her, (for the love of the Sun for her had not been moderate), and, urged on by resentment at a rival, she published the intrigue, and, when spread abroad, brought it to the notice of her father. He, fierce and unrelenting, cruelly buried her alive deep in the ground, as she entreated and stretched out her hands towards the light of the Sun, and cried, "'Twas he that offered violence to me against my will;" and upon her he placed a heap of heavy sand. The son of Hyperion scattered it with his rays, and gave a passage to thee, by which thou mightst be able to put forth thy buried features.

But thou, Nymph, couldst not now raise thy head smothered with the weight of the earth; and there thou didst lie, a lifeless body. The governor of the winged steeds is said to have beheld nothing more afflicting than that, since the lightnings that caused the death of Phaëton. He, indeed, endeavours, if he can, to recall her cold limbs to an enlivening heat, by the strength of his rays. But, since fate opposes attempts so great, he sprinkles both her body and the place with odoriferous nectar, and having first uttered many a complaint he says, "Still shalt thou reach the skies."[1] Immediately, the body, steeped in the heavenly nectar, dissolves, and moistens the earth with its odoriferous juices; and a shoot

[1] That is to say, "You shall arise from the earth as a tree bearing frankincense: the gums of which, burnt in sacrifice to the Gods, shall reach the heavens with their sweet odours."

of frankincense having taken root by degrees through the clods, rises up and bursts the hillock with its top.

But the author of light came no more to Clytie (although love might have excused her grief, and her grief the betrayal); and he put an end to his intercourse with her. From that time she, who had made so mad a use of her passion, pined away, loathing the other Nymphs; and in the open air, night and day, she sat on the bare ground, with her hair dishevelled and unadorned. And for nine days, without water or food, she subsisted in her feast, merely on dew and her own tears; and she did not raise herself from the ground. She only used to look towards the face of the God as he moved along, and to turn her own features towards him. They say that her limbs became rooted fast in the ground; and a livid paleness turned part of her colour into that of a bloodless plant. There is a redness in some part; and a flower, very like a violet,[1] conceals her face. Though she is held fast by a root, she turns towards the Sun, and though changed, she still retains her passion.

FABLE IV

Daphnis is turned into a stone. Scython is changed from a man into a woman. Celmus is changed into adamant. Crocus and Smilax are made into flowers. The Curetes are produced from a shower.

Thus she spoke; and the wondrous deed charms their ears. Some deny that it was possible to be done, some say that real Gods can do all things; but Bacchus is not one of them. When her sisters have become silent, Alcithoë is called upon; who running with her shuttle through the warp of the hanging web, says, "I keep silence upon the well-known amours of Daphnis, the shepherd of Ida, whom the resentment of the Nymph, his paramour, turned into a stone.

[1] Probably the small aromatic flower which we call heliotrope, with its violet hue and delightful perfume.

Such mighty grief inflames those who are in love. Nor do I relate how once Scython, the law of nature being altered, was of both sexes, first a man, then a woman. Thee too, I pass by, O Celmus, now adamant, formerly most attached to Jupiter when little; and the Curetes,[1] sprung from a plenteous shower of rain; Crocus, too, changed, together with Smilax, into little flowers; and I will entertain your minds with a pleasing novelty.

FABLE V

The Naiäd Salmacis falls in love with the youth Hermaphroditus, who rejects her advances. While he is bathing, she leaps into the water, and seizing the youth in her arms, they become one body, retaining their different sexes.

Learn how Salmacis became infamous, and why it enervates, with its enfeebling waters, and softens the limbs bathed in it. The cause is unknown; but the properties of the fountain are very well known. The Naiads nursed a boy, born to Mercury of the Cytherean Goddess in the caves of Ida; whose face was such that therein both mother and father could be discerned; he likewise took his name from them. As soon as he had completed thrice five years, he forsook his native mountains, and leaving Ida, the place of his nursing, he loved to wander over unknown spots, and to see unknown rivers, his curiosity lessening the fatigue. He went, too, to the Lycian cities, and the Carians, that border upon Lycia. Here he sees a pool of water, clear to the very ground at the bottom; here there are no fenny reeds, no barren sedge, no rushes with their sharp points. The water is translucent; but the edges of the pool are enclosed with green turf, and with grass ever verdant. A Nymph dwells there; but one neither skilled in hunting, nor accustomed to bend the bow, nor to contend in speed; the only one, too, of all the Naiads not known to the swift Diana. The report is, that her sisters often said to her, "Salmacis, do take either the javelin, or the painted quiver,

[1] The ancient inhabitants of Crete.

and unite thy leisure with the toils of the chase." She takes neither the javelin, nor the painted quiver, nor does she unite her leisure with the toils of the chase. But sometimes she is bathing her beauteous limbs in her own spring; and often is she straitening her hair with a comb of Citorian boxwood,[1] and consulting the waters, into which she looks, what is befitting her. At other times, covering her body with a transparent garment, she reposes either on the soft leaves, or on the soft grass. Ofttimes is she gathering flowers. And then, too, by chance was she gathering them when she beheld the youth, and wished to possess him, thus seen.

But though she hastened to approach the youth, still she did not approach him before she had put herself in order, and before she had surveyed her garments, and put on her best looks, and deserved to be thought beautiful. Then thus did she begin to speak: "O youth, most worthy to be thought to be a God! if thou art a God, thou mayst well be Cupid; but, if thou art a mortal, happy are they who begot thee, and blessed is thy brother, and fortunate indeed thy sister, if thou hast one, and the nurse as well who gave thee the breast. But far, far more fortunate than all these is she; if thou hast any wife, if thou shouldst vouchsafe any one the honour of marriage. And if any one is thy wife, then let my pleasure be stolen; but, if thou hast none, let me be thy wife, and let us unite in one tie." After these things said, the Naiad is silent; a blush tinges the face of the youth: he knows not what love is, but even to blush becomes him. Such is the colour of apples, hanging on a tree exposed to the sun, or of painted ivory, or of the moon blushing beneath her brightness, when the aiding cymbals[2] of brass are resounding in vain. Upon the Nymph desiring, without ceasing, such kisses at least as he might give to his sister, and now laying her hands

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[1] A mountain of Paphlagonia, famous for the excellence of the wood of the box trees that grow there.

[2] At an eclipse it was supposed by the multitude that the moon was being subjected to spells of magicians, and that she was struggling against them, on which drums, trumpets, and cymbals were resorted to, to drown the charms repeated by the enchanters.

upon his neck, white as ivory, he says, "Wilt thou desist, or am I to fly, and to leave this place, together with thee?"

Salmacis is affrighted, and says, "I freely give up this spot to thee, stranger," and, with a retiring step, she pretends to go away. But then looking back, and hid in a covert of shrubs, she lies concealed, and puts her bended knees down to the ground. But he, just like a boy, and as though unobserved on the retired sward, goes here and there, and in the sportive waves dips the soles of his feet, and then his feet as far as his ankles. Nor is there any delay; being charmed with the temperature of the pleasant waters, he throws off his soft garments from his tender body. Then, indeed, Salmacis is astonished, and burns with desire for his naked beauty. The eyes, too, of the Nymph are on fire, no otherwise than as when the Sun, most brilliant with his clear orb, is reflected from the opposite image of a mirror. With difficulty does she endure delay; hardly does she now defer her joy. Now she longs to embrace him; and now, distracted, she can hardly contain herself. He, clapping his body with his hollow palms, swiftly leaps into the stream, and throwing out his arms alternately, shines in the limpid waters, as if any one were to cover statues of ivory, or white lilies, with clear glass.

"I have gained my point," says the Naiad; "see, he is mine!" and, all her garments thrown aside, she plunges in the midst of the waters, and seizes him resisting her, and snatches reluctant kisses, and thrusts down her hands, and touches his breast against his will, and clings about the youth, now one way, and now another. Finally, as he is struggling against her, and desiring to escape, she entwines herself about him, like a serpent which the royal bird takes up and is bearing aloft; and as it hangs, it holds fast his head and feet, and enfolds his spreading wings with its tail. Or, as the ivy is wont to wind itself along the tall trunks of trees; and as the polypus holds fast its enemy, caught beneath the waves, by letting down its suckers on all sides; so does the descendant of Atlas still persist, and deny the Nymph the hoped-for joy. She presses him hard; and clinging to him with every limb, as she holds fast, she says, "Struggle as thou mayst, perverse one, still thou shalt not escape. So ordain it, ye Gods, and let no

time separate him from me, nor me from him." Her prayers find propitious Deities, for the mingled bodies of the two are united, and one human shape is put upon them; just as if any one should see branches beneath a common bark join in growing, and spring up together. So, when their bodies meet together in the firm embrace, they are no more two, and their form is two-fold, so that they can neither be styled woman nor boy; they seem to be neither and both.

Therefore, when Hermaphroditus sees that the limpid waters into which he has descended as a man, have made him but half a male, and that his limbs are softened in them, holding up his hands, he says, but now no longer with the voice of a male, "O, both father and mother, grant this favour to your son, who has the name of you both, that whoever enters these streams a man, may go out thence but half a man, and that he may suddenly become effeminate in the waters when touched." Both parents, moved, give their assent to the words of their two-shaped son, and taint the fountain with drugs of ambiguous quality.

FABLE VI

Bacchus, to punish the daughters of Minyas for their contempt of his worship, changes them into bats, and their work into ivy and vine leaves.

There was now an end of their stories; and still do the daughters of Minyas go on with their work, and despise the God, and desecrate his festival; when, on a sudden, tambourines unseen resound with their jarring noise; the pipe, too, with the crooked horn, and the tinkling brass, re-echo; myrrh and saffron shed their fragrant odours; and, a thing past all belief, their webs begin to grow green, and the cloth hanging in the loom to put forth foliage like ivy. Part changes into vines, and what were threads before, are now turned into vine shoots. Vine branches spring from the warp, and the purple lends its splendour to the tinted grapes.

And now the day was past, and the time came on, which you could neither call darkness nor light, but yet the very

commencement of the dubious night along with the light. The house seemed suddenly to shake, and unctuous torches to burn, and the building to shine with glowing fires, and the fictitious phantoms of savage wild beasts to howl. Presently, the sisters are hiding themselves throughout the smoking house, and in different places are avoiding the fires and the light. While they are seeking a hiding place, a membrane is stretched over their small limbs, and covers their arms with light wings; nor does the darkness suffer them to know by what means they have lost their former shape. No feathers bear them up; yet they support themselves on pellucid wings; and, endeavouring to speak, they utter a voice very diminutive even in proportion to their bodies, and express their low complaints with a squeaking sound. They frequent houses, not woods; and, abhorring the light, they fly abroad by night. And from the late evening do they derive their name.[1]

FABLE VII

Tisiphone, being sent by Juno to the Palace of Athamas, causes him to become mad; on which he dashes his son Learchus to pieces against a wall. He then pursues his wife Ino, who throws herself headlong from the top of a rock into the sea, with her other son Melicerta in her arms: when Neptune, at the intercession of Venus, changes them into Sea Deities. The attendants of Ino, who have followed her in her flight, are changed, some into stone, and others into birds, as they are about to throw themselves into the sea after their mistress.

But then the Divine power of Bacchus is framed throughout all Thebes; and his aunt [Ino] is everywhere telling of the great might of the new Divinity; she alone,[2] out of so

[1] Vespertiliones, from *vesper,* evening.

[2] Semele having died a shocking death, Autonoë having seen her son Actæon changed into a stag, and then devoured by his dogs, and Agave having assisted in tearing to pieces her own son Pentheus.

many sisters, is free from sorrow, except that which her sisters have occasioned. Juno beholds her, having her soul elevated with her children, and her alliance with Athamas, and the God her fosterchild. She cannot brook this, and says to herself, "Was the child of a concubine able to transform the Mæonian sailors, and to overwhelm them in the sea, and to give the entrails of the son to be torn to pieces by his mother, and to cover the three daughters of Minyas with newly formed wings? Shall Juno be able to do nothing but lament these griefs unrevenged? And is that sufficient for me? Is this my only power? He himself instructs me what to do. It is right to be taught even by an enemy. And what madness can do, he shows enough, and more than enough, by the slaughter of Pentheus. Why should not Ino, too, be goaded by madness, and submit to an example kindred to those of her sisters?"

There is a shelving path, shaded with dismal yew, which leads through profound silence to the infernal abodes. Here languid Styx exhales vapours; and the new-made ghosts descend this way, and phantoms when they have enjoyed funereal rites. Horror and winter possess these dreary regions far and wide, and the ghosts newly arrived know not where the way is that leads to the Stygian city, or where is the dismal palace of the black Pluto. The wide city has a thousand passages, and gates open on every side. And as the sea receives the rivers for the whole earth, so does that spot receive all the souls; nor is it too little for any amount of people, nor does it perceive the crowd to increase. The shades wander about, bloodless, without body and bones; and some throng the place of judgment; some the abode of the infernal prince. Some pursue various callings, in imitation of their former life; their own punishment confines others.

Juno, the daughter of Saturn, leaving her celestial habitation, submits to go thither, so much does she give way to hatred and to anger. Soon as she has entered there, and the threshold groans, pressed by her sacred body, Cerberus raises his threefold mouth, and utters triple barkings at the same moment.

She summons the Sisters,[1] begotten of Night, terrible and implacable Goddesses. They are sitting before the doors of the prison shut close with adamant, and are combing black vipers from their hair. Soon as they recognize her amid the shades of darkness, these Deities arise. This place is called "the accursed." Tityus[2] is giving his entrails to be mangled, and is stretched over nine acres. By thee, Tantalus,[3] no waters are reached, and the tree which overhangs thee, starts away. Sisyphus,[4] thou art either catching or thou art pushing on the stone destined to fall again. Ixion[5] is whirled round, and both follows and flies from himself. The grand-daughters, too, of Belus, who dared to plot the destruction of their cousins, are everlastingly taking up the water which they lose. After the daughter of Saturn has beheld

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[1] These were the Furies, fabled to be the daughters of Night and Acheron. They were three in number, Tisiphone, Alecto, and Megæra, and were supposed to be the avengers of crime and wickedness.

[2] Tityus was the son of Jupiter and Elara. On account of his enormous size, the poets sometimes style him a son of the Earth. Attempting to commit violence upon Latona, he was slain by the arrows of Apollo, and precipitated to the infernal regions, where he was condemned to have his liver constantly devoured by a vulture, and then renewed, to perpetuate his torments.

[3] He was the son of Jupiter, by the Nymph Plote. The crime for which he was punished is differently related by the poets. At an entertainment which he gave to the Deities, he caused his own son, Pelops, to be served up, on which Ceres inadvertently ate his shoulder. He was doomed to suffer intense hunger and thirst, amid provisions of all kinds within his reach, which perpetually receded from him.

[4] Sisyphus, the son of Æolus, was a daring robber, who infested Attica. He was slain by Theseus; and being sent to the infernal regions, was condemned to the punishment of rolling a great stone to the top of a mountain, which it had no sooner reached than it fell down again, and renewed his labour.

[5] Being advanced by Jupiter to heaven, he presumed to make an attempt on Juno. Jupiter, to deceive him, formed a cloud in her shape, on which Ixion begot the Centaurs. He was cast into Tartarus, and was there fastened to a wheel, which turned round incessantly.

all these with a stern look, and Ixion before all; again, after him, looking upon Sisyphus, she says, "Why does he alone, of all the brothers, suffer eternal punishment? and why does a rich palace contain the proud Athamas, who, with his wife, has ever despised me?" And then she explains the cause of her hatred and of her coming, and what it is she desires. What she desires is, that the palace of Cadmus shall not stand, and that the Sister Furies shall involve Athamas in crime. She mingles together promises, commands, and entreaties, and solicits the Goddesses. When Juno has thus spoken, Tisiphone, with her locks dishevelled as they are, shakes them, and throws back from her face the snakes crawling over it; and thus she says: "There is no need of a long preamble; whatever thou commandest, consider it as done; leave these hateful realms, and betake thyself to the air of a better heaven."

Juno returns, overjoyed; and, preparing to enter heaven, Iris,[1] the daughter of Thaumas, purifies her by sprinkling water. Nor is there any delay; the persecuting Tisiphone takes a torch reeking with gore, and puts on a cloak red with fluid blood, and is girt with twisted snakes, and then goes forth from her abode. Mourning attends her as she goes, and Fright, and Terror, and Madness with quivering features. She now reaches the threshold; the Æolian door-posts are said to have shaken, and paleness tints the maple door; the Sun, too, flies from the place. His wife is terrified at these prodigies; Athamas, too, is alarmed, and they are both preparing to leave the house. The baneful Erinnys stands in the way, and blocks up the passage; and extending her arms twisted round with folds of vipers, she shakes her locks; the snakes thus moved, emit a sound. Some lying about her shoulders, some gliding around her temples, send forth hissings and vomit forth corruption, and dart forth their tongues. Then she tears away two snakes from the middle of her hair, which, with pestilential hand, she throws against them. But these creep along the breasts of Ino and Athamas, and inspire them with direful intent. Nor do they inflict any wounds

[1] The Goddess of the Rainbow.

upon their limbs; it is the mind that feels the direful stroke. She had brought, too, with her a monstrous composition of liquid poison, the foam of the mouth of Cerberus, and the venom of Echidna;[1] and purposeless aberrations, and the forgetfulness of a darkened understanding, and crime, and tears, and rage, and the love of murder. All these were blended together; and, mingled with fresh blood she had boiled them in a hollow vessel of brass, stirred about with a stalk of green hemlock. And while they are trembling, she throws the maddening poison into the breasts of them both, and moves their inmost vitals. Then repeatedly waving her torch in the same circle, she swiftly follows up the flames thus excited with fresh flames. Thus triumphant, and having executed her commands, she returns to the empty realms of the great Pluto; and she ungirds the snakes which she had put on.

Immediately the son of Æolus, filled with rage, cries out, in the midst of his palace, "Ho! companions, spread your nets in this wood; for here a lioness was just now beheld by me with two young ones." And, in his madness, he follows the footsteps of his wife, as though of a wild beast; and he snatches Learchus, smiling and stretching forth his little arms from the bosom of his mother, and three or four times he whirls him round in the air like a sling, and, frenzied, he dashes in pieces[2] the bones of the infant against the hard stones. Then, at last, the mother being roused (whether it was grief that caused it, or whether the power of the poison spread over her), yells aloud, and runs away distracted, with dishevelled hair; and carrying thee, Melicerta, a little child, in her bare arms, she cries aloud "Evoë, Bacche." At the name of Bacchus, Juno smiles, and says, "May thy foster-child[3] do thee this service."

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[1] The Hydra, or dragon of the marsh of Lerna, which Hercules slew. It was fabled to be partly a woman, and partly a serpent, and to have been begotten by Typhon. According to some accounts, this monster had seven heads.

[2] Athamas slew his son while hunting, mistaking him for a stag.

[3] Bacchus was the foster-child of Ino, who was the sister of his mother Semele.

There is a rock that hangs over the sea; the lowest part is worn hollow by the waves, and defends the waters covered thereby from the rain. The summit is rugged, and stretches out its brow over the open sea. This Ino climbs (madness gives her strength), and, restrained by no fear, she casts herself and her burden[1] into the deep; the water, struck by her fall, is white with foam. But Venus, pitying the misfortunes of her guiltless grand-daughter, in soothing words thus addresses her uncle: "O Neptune, thou God of the waters, to whom fell a power next after the empire of heaven, great things indeed do I request; but do thou take compassion on my kindred, whom thou seest being tossed upon the boundless Ionian sea; and add them to thy Deities. I have surely some interest with the sea, if, indeed, I once was foam formed in the hallowed deep, and my Grecian name[2] is derived from that." Neptune yields to her request; and takes away from them all that is mortal, and gives them a venerable majesty; and alters both their name and their shape, and calls Palæmon a Divinity, together with his mother Leucothoë.

Her Sidonian attendants,[3] so far as they could, tracing the prints of their feet, saw the last of them on the edge of the rock; and thinking that there was no doubt of their death, they lamented the house of Cadmus, with their hands tearing their hair and their garments; and they threw the odium on the Goddess, as being unjust and too severe against the concubine. Juno could not endure their reproaches, and said, "I will make you yourselves tremendous memorials of my displeasure." Confirmation followed her words. For the one who had been especially attached, said, "I will follow the queen into the sea;" and about to give the leap, she could not be moved any way, and adhering to the rock, there

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[1] This was her son Melicerta, who, according to Pausanias, was received by dolphins, and was landed by them on the isthmus of Corinth.

[2] Aphrodite means "foam-sprung."

[3] The Theban matrons are meant, who had married the companions of Cadmus that accompanied him from Phœnicia.

she stuck fast. Another, while she was attempting to beat her breast with the accustomed blows, perceived in the attempt that her arms had become stiff. One, as by chance she had extended her hands over the waters of the sea, becoming a rock, held out her hands in those same waters. You might see the fingers of another suddenly hardened in her hair, as she was tearing her locks seized on the top of her head. In whatever posture each was found at the beginning of the change, in the same she remained. Some became birds; which, sprung from Ismenus, skim along the surface of the waves in those seas, with the wings which they have assumed.

FABLE VIII

The misfortunes of his family oblige Cadmus to leave Thebes, and to retire with his wife Hermione to Illyria, where they are changed into serpents.

The son of Agenor knows not that his daughter and his little grandsons are now Deities of the sea. Forced by sorrow, and a succession of calamities, and the prodigies which, many in number, he had beheld, the founder flies from his city, as though the ill-luck of the spot, and not his own, pressed hard upon him; and driven, in a long series of wandering, he reaches the coast of Illyria, with his exiled wife. And now, loaded with woes and with years, while they are reflecting on the first disasters of their house, and in their discourse are recounting their misfortunes, Cadmus says, "Was that dragon a sacred one, that was pierced by my spear, at the time when, setting out from Sidon, I sowed the teeth of the dragon in the ground, a seed till then unknown? If the care of the Gods avenges this with resentment so unerring, I pray that I myself, as a serpent, may be lengthened out into an extended belly." Thus he says; and, as a serpent, he is lengthened out into an extended belly, and perceives scales growing on his hardened skin, and his black body become speckled with azure spots; and he falls flat on his breast, and his legs, joined into one, taper out by degrees into a thin round point. His arms are still remaining; those arms which re-

main he stretches out; and, as the tears are flowing down his face, still that of a man, he says, "Come hither, wife, come hither, most unhappy one, and, while something of me yet remains, touch me; and take my hand, while it is still a hand, and while I am not a serpent all over." He, indeed, desires to say more, but, on a sudden, his tongue is divided into two parts. Nor are words in his power when he offers to speak; and as often as he attempts to utter any complaints, he makes a hissing: this is the voice that Nature leaves him. His wife, smiting her naked breast with her hand, cries aloud, "Stay, Cadmus! and deliver thyself, unhappy one, from this monstrous form. Cadmus, what means this? Where are thy feet? where are both thy shoulders and thy hands? where is thy colour and thy form, and, while I speak, where all else besides? Why do ye not, celestial Gods, turn me as well into a similar serpent?" Thus she spoke; he licked the face of his wife, and crept into her dear bosom, as though he recognized her; and gave her embraces, and reached her well-known neck.

Whoever is by, (some attendants are present), is alarmed; but the crested snakes soothe them with their slippery necks, and suddenly they are two serpents, and in joined folds they creep along, until they enter the covert of an adjacent grove. Now, too, do they neither shun mankind, nor hurt them with wounds, and the gentle serpents keep in mind what once they were.

FABLE IX

Perseus, the son of Jupiter and Danaë, having killed Medusa, carries her head into Africa, where the blood that runs from it produces serpents. Atlas, king of that country, terrified at the remembrance of an oracle, which had foretold that his golden fruit should be taken by one of the sons of Jupiter, not only orders him to depart, but even resorts to violence to drive him away, on which Perseus shows him the Gorgon's head, and changes him into a mountain.

But yet their grandson, Bacchus, gave them both a great consolation, under this change of form; whom India, sub-

dued by him, worshipped as a God, and whom Achaia honoured with erected temples. Acrisius the son of Abas, descended of the same race, alone remained, to drive him from the walls of the Argive city, and to bear arms against the God, and to believe him not to be the offspring of Jove. Neither did he think Perseus to be the offspring of Jupiter, whom Danaë had conceived in a shower of gold; but soon (so great is the power of truth) Acrisius was sorry, both that he had insulted the God, and that he had not acknowledged his grandson. The one was now placed in heaven, while the other, bearing the memorable spoil of the viperous monster, cut the yielding air with hissing wings; and while the conqueror was hovering over the Libyan sands, bloody drops, from the Gorgon's head, fell down, upon receiving which, the ground quickened them into various serpents. For this cause, that region is filled and infested with snakes.

Carried thence, by the fitful winds, through boundless space, he is borne now here, now there, just like a watery cloud, and, from the lofty sky, looks down upon the earth, removed afar; and he flies over the whole world. Three times he saw the cold Bears, thrice did he see the claws of the Crab; ofttimes he was borne to the West, many a time to the East. And now, the day declining, afraid to trust himself to the night, he stopped in the Western part of the world, in the kingdom of Atlas; and there he sought a little rest, until Lucifer should usher forth the fires of Aurora, Aurora, the chariot of the day. Here was Atlas, the son of Iapetus, surpassing all men in the vastness of his body. Under this king was the extremity of the earth, and the sea which holds its waters under the panting horses of the Sun, and receives the wearied chariot. For him, a thousand flocks, and as many herds, wandered over the pastures, and no neighbouring places disturbed the land. Leaves of the trees, shining with radiant gold, covered branches of gold, and apples of gold. "My friend," said Perseus to him, "if the glory of a noble race influences thee, Jupiter is the author of my descent; or if thou art an admirer of exploits, thou wilt admire mine. I beg of thee hospitality, and a resting place." The other was mindful of an ancient oracle. The Parnassian

Themis had given this response: "A time will come, Atlas, when thy tree shall be stripped of its gold, and a son of Jove shall have the honour of the prize." Dreading this, Atlas had enclosed his orchard with solid walls, and had given it to be kept by a huge dragon; and expelled all strangers from his territories. To Perseus, too, he says, "Far hence begone, lest the glory of the exploits, to which thou falsely pretendest, and Jupiter as well, be far from protecting thee." He adds violence as well to his threats, and tries to drive him from his doors, as he hesitates and mingles resolute words with persuasive ones. Inferior in strength (for who could be a match for Atlas in strength!), he says, "Since my friendship is of so little value to thee, accept this present;" and then, turning his face away, he exposes on the left side the horrible features of Medusa. Atlas, great as he is, becomes a mountain. Now his beard and his hair are changed into woods; his shoulders and his hands become mountain ridges, and what was formerly his head, is the summit on the top of the mountain. His bones become stones; then, enlarged on every side, he grows to an immense height, (so you willed it, ye Gods), and the whole heaven, with so many stars, rests upon him.

FABLE X

Perseus, after his victory over Atlas, and his change into a mountain, arrives in Æthiopia, at the time when Andromeda is exposed to be devoured by a monster. He kills it, and hides the Gorgon's head under the sand, covered with sea weed and plants; which are immediately turned into coral. He then renders thanks to the Gods for his victory, and marries Andromeda. At the marriage feast he relates the manner in which he had killed Medusa; and the reason why Minerva had changed her hair into serpents.

The grandson of Hippotas[1] had shut up the winds in their eternal prison; and Lucifer who reminds men of their work,

[1] Æolus, the God of the Winds, was the son of Jupiter, by Acesta, the daughter of Hippotas.

was risen in the lofty sky, in all his splendour. Resuming his wings, Perseus binds his feet with them on either side, and is girt with his crooked weapon, and cleaves the liquid air with his winged ancles. Nations innumerable being left behind, around and below, he beholds the people of the Æthiopians and the lands of Cepheus. There the unjust Ammon[1] had ordered the innocent Andromeda to suffer punishment for her mother's tongue.[2]

Soon as the descendant of Abas beheld her, with her arms bound to the hard rock, but that the light breeze was moving her hair, and her eyes were running with warm tears, he would have thought her to be a work of marble. Unconsciously he takes fire, and is astonished; captivated with the appearance of her beauty, thus beheld, he almost forgets to wave his wings in the air. When he has lighted on the ground, he says, "O thou, undeserving of these chains, but rather of those by which anxious lovers are mutually united, disclose to me, inquiring both the name of this land and of thyself, and why thou wearest these chains." At first she is silent, and, a virgin, she does not dare address a man; and with her hands she would have concealed her blushing features, if she had not been bound; her eyes, 'twas all she could do, she filled with gushing tears. Upon his often urging her, lest she should seem unwilling to confess her offence, she told the name both of the country and of herself, and how great had been the confidence of her mother in her beauty. All not yet being told, the waves roared, and a monster approaching, appeared with its head raised out of the boundless ocean,

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[1] Jupiter, with the surname of Ammon, had a temple in the deserts of Libya, where he was worshipped under the shape of a ram; a form which he was supposed to have assumed, when, in common with the other Deities, he fled from the attacks of the Giants. The oracle of Jupiter Ammon being consulted relative to the sea monster, which Neptune, at the request of the Nereids, had sent against the Ethiopians, answered that Andromeda must be exposed to be devoured by it.

[2] Cassiope, the mother of Andromeda, had dared to compare her own beauty with that of the Nereids. Cepheus, the son of Phœnix, was the father of Andromeda.

and covered the wide expanse with its breast. The virgin shrieks aloud; her mournful father, and her distracted mother, are there, both wretched, but the latter more justly so. Nor do they bring her any help with them, but tears suitable to the occasion, and lamentations, and they cling round her body, bound to the rock.

Then thus the stranger says: "Plenty of time will be left for your tears hereafter, the season for giving aid is but short. If I were to demand her in marriage, I, Perseus, the son of Jove, and of her whom, in prison, Jove embraced in the impregnating shower of gold, Perseus, the conqueror of the Gorgon with her serpent locks, and who has dared, on waving wings, to move through the æthereal air, I should surely be preferred before all as your son-in-law. To so many recommendations I endeavour to add merit (if only the Deities favour me). I only stipulate that she may be mine, if preserved by my valour." Her parents embrace the condition, (for who could hesitate?) and they entreat his aid, and promise as well, the kingdom as a dowry. Behold! as a ship onward speeding, with the beak fixed in its prow, ploughs the waters, impelled by the perspiring arms of youths; so the monster, moving the waves by the impulse of its breast, was as far distant from the rocks, as that distance in the mid space of air, which a Balearic string can pass with the whirled plummet of lead; when suddenly, the youth, spurning the earth with his feet, rose on high into the clouds. As the shadow of the hero was seen on the surface of the sea, the monster vented its fury on the shadow so beheld. And as the bird of Jupiter,[1] when he has espied on the silent plain a serpent exposing its livid back to the sun, seizes it behind; and lest it should turn upon him its raging mouth, fixes his greedy talons in its scaly neck; so did the winged hero, in his rapid flight through the yielding air, press the back of the monster, and the descendant of Inachus thrust his sword up to the very hilt in its right shoulder, as it roared aloud.

Tortured by the grievous wound, it sometimes raises itself aloft in the air, sometimes it plunges beneath the waves, some-

[1] The eagle was the bird sacred to Jove.

times it wheels about, just like a savage boar, which a pack of hounds in full cry around him affrights. With swift wings he avoids the eager bites of the monster, and, with his crooked sword, one while wounds its back covered with hollow shells, where it is exposed, at another time the ribs of its sides, and now, where its tapering tail terminates in that of a fish. The monster vomits forth from its mouth streams mingled with red blood; its wings, made heavy by it, are wet with the spray. Perseus, not daring any longer to trust himself on his dripping pinions, beholds a rock, which with its highest top projects from the waters when becalmed, but is now covered by the troubled sea. Resting on that, and clinging to the upper ridge of the rock with his left hand, three or four times he thrusts his sword through its entrails, aimed at by him. A shout, with applause, fills the shores and the lofty abodes of the Gods. Cassiope and Cepheus, the father, rejoice, and salute him as their son-in-law, and confess that he is the support and the preserver of their house.

Released from her chains, the virgin walks along, both the reward and the cause of his labours. He himself washes his victorious hands in water taken from the sea; and that it may not injure the snake-bearing head with the bare sand, he softens the ground with leaves; and strews some weeds produced beneath the sea, and lays upon them the face of Medusa, the daughter of Phorcys. The fresh weeds, being still alive, imbibed the poison of the monster in their spongy pith, and hardened by its touch; and felt an unwonted stiffness in their branches and their leaves. But the Nymphs of the sea attempt the wondrous feat on many other weeds, and are pleased at the same result; and raise seed again from them scattered on the waves. Even now the same nature remains in the coral, that it receives hardness from contact with the air; and what was a plant in the sea, out of the sea becomes stone.

To three Deities he erects as many altars of turf; the left one to Mercury; the right to thee, warlike Virgin; the altar of Jove is in the middle. A cow is sacrificed to Minerva; a calf to the wing-footed God, and a bull to thee, greatest of the Deities. Forthwith he takes Andromeda, and the reward

of an achievement so great, without any dowry. Hymenæus and Cupid wave their torches before them; the fires are heaped with abundant perfumes. Garlands, too, are hanging from the houses; flageolets and lyres, and pipes, and songs resound, the happy tokens of a joyous mind. The folding-doors thrown open, the entire gilded halls are displayed, and the nobles of king Cepheus sit down at a feast furnished with splendid preparations. After they have done the feast, and have cheered their minds with the gifts of the generous Bacchus, the grandson of Abas inquires the customs and habits of the country. Immediately one of them, Lyncides, tells him, on his enquiring, the manners and habits of the inhabitants. Soon as he had told him these things, he said, "Now, most valiant Perseus, tell us, I beseech thee, with how great valour and by what arts thou didst cut off the head all hairy with serpents." The descendant of Abas tells them that there is a spot situate beneath cold Atlas, safe in its bulwark of a solid mass; that, in the entrance of this, dwelt the two sisters, the daughters of Phorcys, who shared the use of a single eye; that he stealthily, by sly craft, while it was being handed over, obtained possession of this by putting his hand in the way; and that through rocks far remote, and pathless, and bristling with woods on their craggy sides, he had arrived at the abodes of the Gorgons, and saw every where, along the fields and the roads, statues of men and wild beasts turned into stone, from their natural form, at the sight of Medusa; yet that he himself, from the reflection on the brass of the shield which his left hand bore, beheld the visage of the horrible Medusa; and that, while a sound sleep held her and her serpents entranced, he took the head from off the neck; and that Pegasus and his brother,[1] fleet with wings, were produced from the blood of her, their mother. He added, too, the dangers of his lengthened journey, themselves no fiction; what seas, what lands he had seen beneath him from on high, and what stars he had reached with his waving wings.

Yet, before it was expected, he was silent; whereupon one of the nobles rejoined, inquiring why she alone, of her sisters,

[1] Pegasus and Chrysaor, the winged horses.

wore snakes mingled alternately with her hair. "Stranger," said he, "since thou enquirest on a matter worthy to be related, hear the cause of the thing thou enquirest after. She was the most famed for her beauty, and the coveted hope of many wooers; nor, in the whole of her person, was any part more worthy of notice than her hair: I have met with some who said they had seen it. The sovereign of the sea is said to have deflowered her in the Temple of Minerva. The daughter of Jove turned away, and covered her chaste eyes with her shield. And that this might not be unpunished, she changed the hair of the Gorgon into hideous snakes. Now, too, that she may alarm her surprised foes with terror, she bears in front upon her breast, those snakes which she thus produced.

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